

# PC action

BRITAIN'S BRIGHTEST PC GAMES MAGAZINE

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LucasArts take on the dark side of the Star Wars fantasy

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we talk to composers struggling to hit the right notes

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why it's on the cutting edge of technology

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At what cost  
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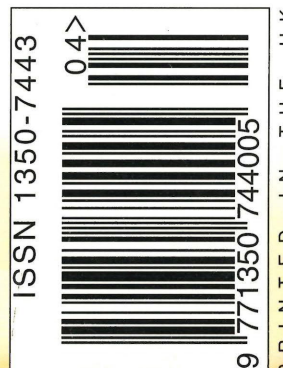
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ISSUE 6  
APRIL 1994

**MATCH OF THE DAY**

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**1942 THE PACIFIC AIR WAR**

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PRINTED IN THE UK





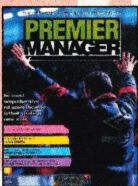
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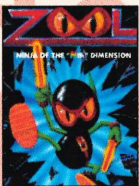
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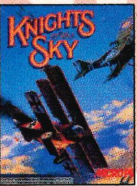
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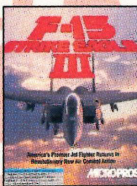
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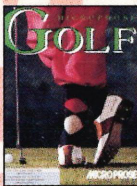
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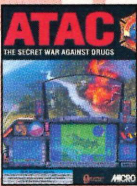
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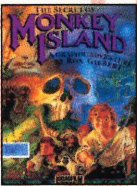
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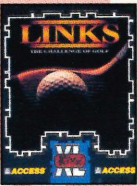
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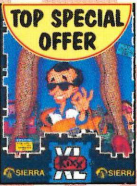
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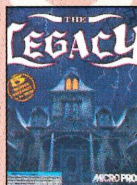
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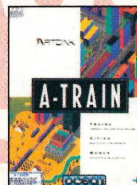
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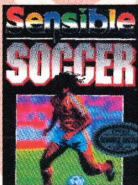
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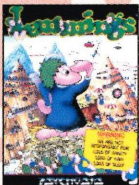
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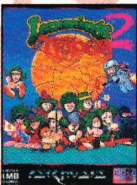
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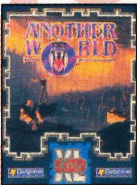
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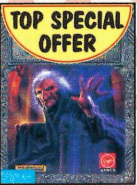
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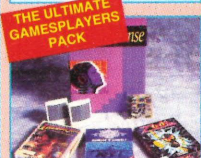
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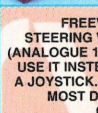
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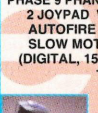
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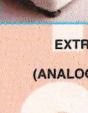
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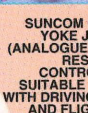
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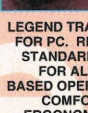
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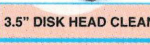
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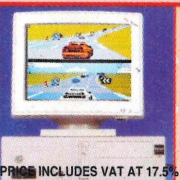
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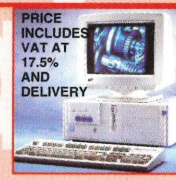
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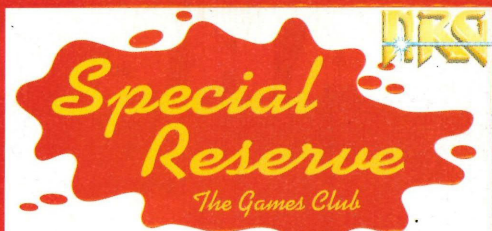


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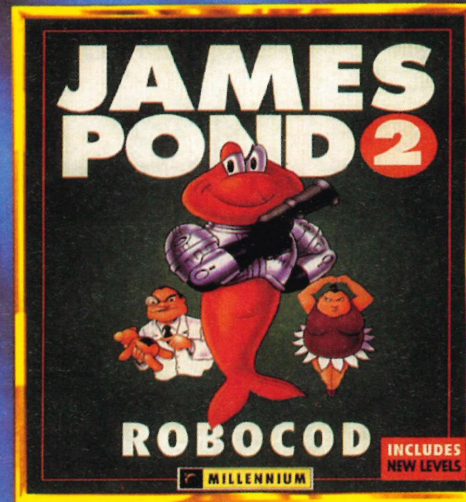
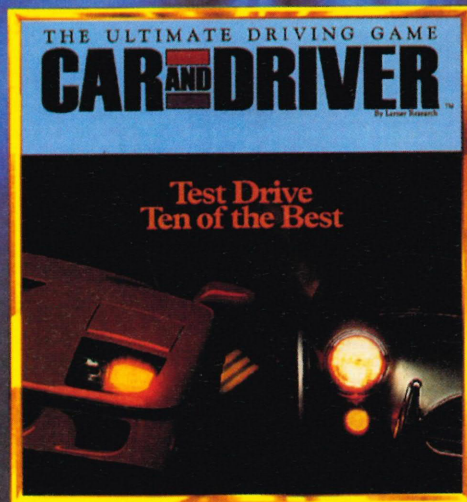
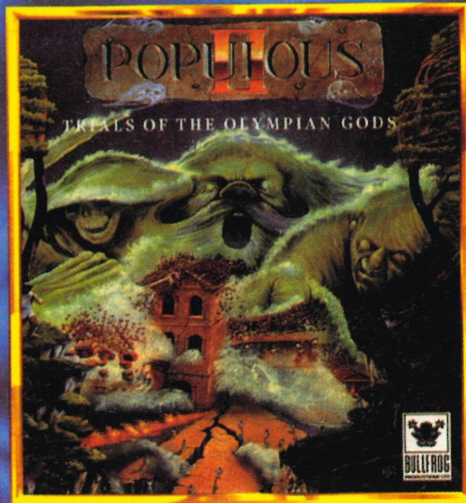
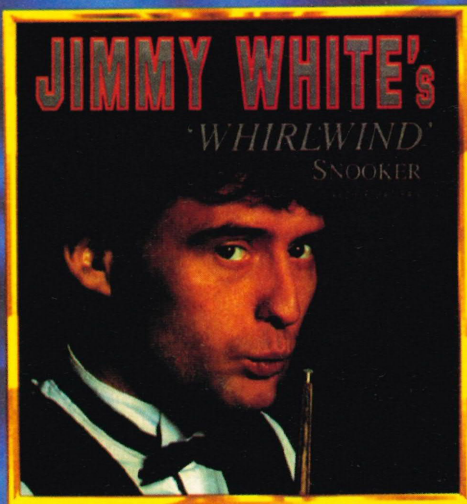
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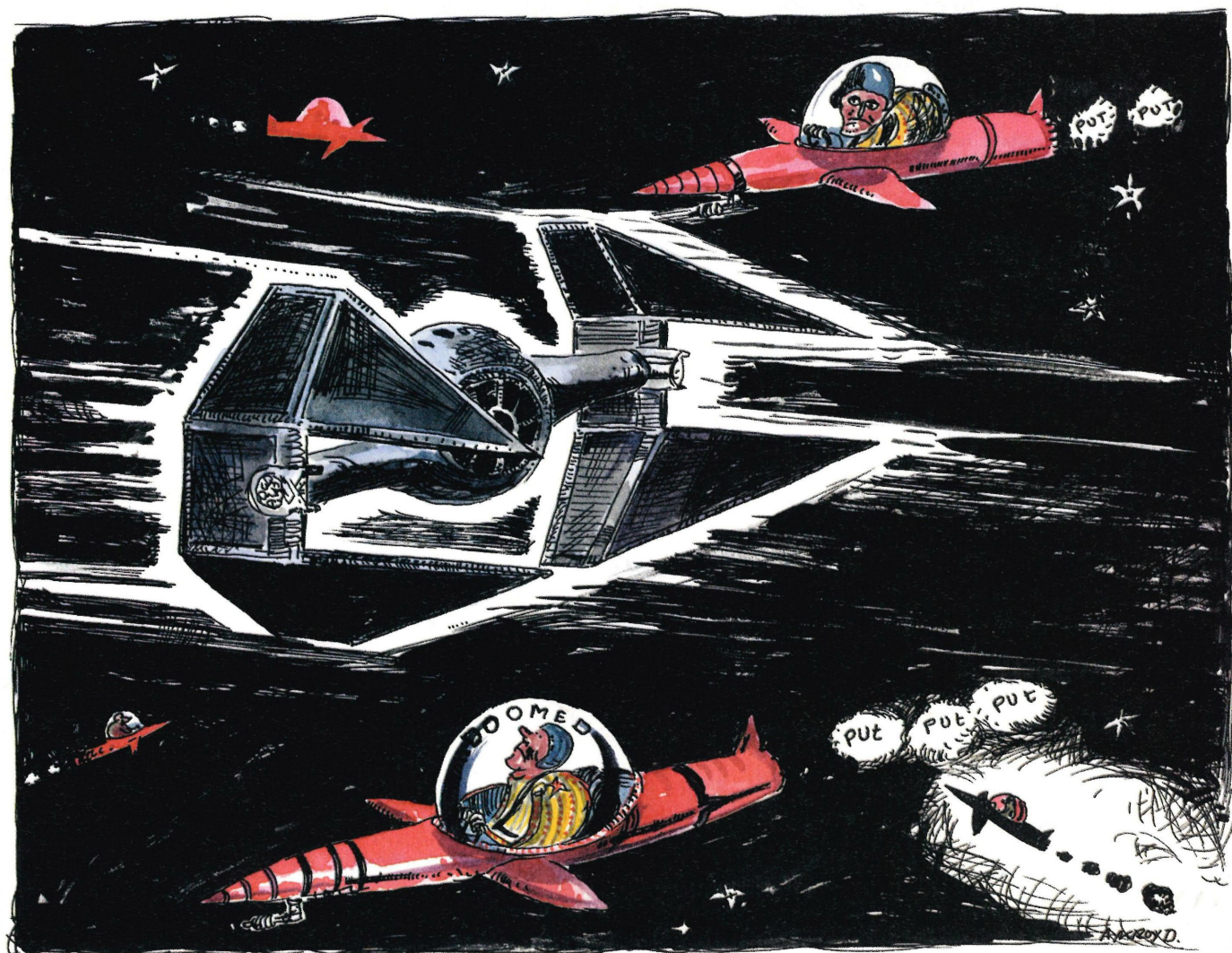
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**Editor:** Sharon Greaves

**Deputy Editor:** David Longworth

**Art Editor:** Fiona Howarth

**Deputy Art Editor:** James Eagers

**Staff Writers:** Darren Allan, Peter Hawley

**Production Editor:** Karen Levy

**Systems Technician:** Nick Moran

**Contributors:** Jon Ewing, Paul McNally,  
Tony Kaye, Jason Spiller, John Berlyne,  
Zoe Porter

**Advertising Department:**  
Tel (0625) 850874 Fax (0625) 876669

**Sales Manager:** Fiona Carey

**Sales Executive:** Helen Cartwright

**Ad Production:** Karen Wright

**Ad Design:** Steve Mattison

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## INSIDE WORD

24

Fancy being the next Paint Along with Nancy? Maybe! Now it's not just the game designers who can let their creativity flow. Design packages allowing you to draw your own cards and sculpture your own cartoons are on the up in the PC world



## OUTLINE

26

Crispin Sinclair, son of Sir Clive, has stopped toddling along in a C5 to set up his own games mail order company. We talk to the man behind the name and the means by which he has been able to progress from the ZX80 to the PC



## FEATURE

89

For those who would like to be more in the know and more worldly wise there is a wealth of encyclopedic software packages on the market right now. But are such information databases really better than book, film or the television screen?



## FEATURE

63

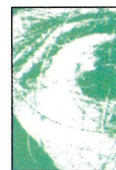
'CD has done game design no favours whatsoever, but in the name of technology it's our responsibility to make it work to its full potential.' The Lawnmower Man, Sales Curve Interactive's stunning new CD-Rom movie style game pushes the boundaries further



## WORKSHOP

76

MicroProse with their stunning 1942 The Pacific Air War and Star Trek: The Next Generation spill the beans on the thought processes behind the games. So too does LucasArts with Tie Fighter and Millennium start a new Lemming-esque craze with the aptly named Diggers



## THE SURGERY

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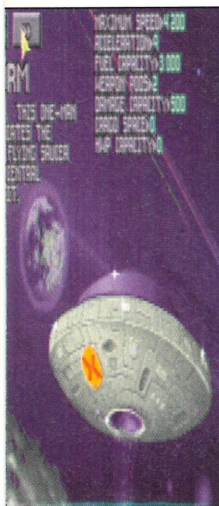
Whether you're stuck in a rut on an graphic adventure game or simply just can't make the grade to progress beyond rookie pilot in a flight simulation, PC Action's very own troubleshooter is, as usual, only too pleased to help in your distress

**'The soundtrack has to sound**

**As video game music enters a new age,  
will we get tunes that can stand the  
test of time?**

p30

**UFO Enemy  
Unknown** makes  
a gigantic leap in  
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## COVERDISK **8**

### 1942 The Pacific War

Witness a magnificent rolling demo of  
flight supremos MicroProse's  
forthcoming 1942 The Pacific Air War

### Match of the Day

Take to the turf and bring a footie team  
to fruition with Zeppelin's playable  
management sim



## CD-ROM COVERDISK **10**

A total of 17 games, both rolling CD  
demos and immensely playable offerings  
have all been weaved together into a  
colossal 360MB of PC Action to offer a  
dream ticket to gamers everywhere



big, it has to sound real'





# HOW TO USE YOUR COVERDISKS

**Beginners only:** If you know your way around your PC it's unlikely you will need this column. However, if you are one of the countless new users who are only just starting to differentiate between your DOS and your doormat please read the following carefully before starting to use your coverdisks. If you do encounter any problems whatsoever you can always give us a call on the PC Action Coverdisk Helpline. You can find the number at the bottom of this page.

**Copying disks:** You will need to copy the contents of your coverdisks onto your hard drive. This is one of the simplest operations you'll have to perform. Naturally enough you should first ensure you have enough storage space on your hard drive.

Some of the programs that come with PC Action have been crunched – electronically compressed in order to squeeze a lot more information onto the disk. This means that during the process of transferring to your hard drive it is expanded. If you need to find more space you will have to delete some of the files already on your drive.

This month PC Action introduces a NEW SIMPLE TO USE menu system that will enable you to carry out the transfer with just a few key presses. This is all you have to do:

**ONE:** Switch on your PC. Put your disk in the floppy drive (usually drive A but occasionally drive B).

Type A: (or B: if appropriate).

**TWO:** Put the disk in the disk drive and type the letter of the drive. This is normally A: but could be B:. Then type PCA C which brings up the cover disk menu. A menu will appear, asking you which of the programs you wish to install. Then it's simply a case of following the on-screen instructions.

Type 1 to install 1942: The Pacific Air War onto your hard drive and type 2 to install Match of the Day.

If you require any help simply press H on your keyboard and a text file will then come up

**Making backups:** If you're extremely safety conscious you may wish to make a back-up of your coverdisks. Very few people actually get around to doing this but it could lead to a number of tears if someone comes along and leaves the disks too close to the monitor and corrupts it. Fortunately, duplicating the PC Action disks couldn't be easier.

Find an empty disk you wish to use as your back-up. If it is already formatted then so much the better. If it isn't you'll have to format it as detailed in your PC's manual. Once this operation is complete you are ready to continue.

Now with your PC Action disk and the new disk at the ready, type in DISKCOPY A: A: (or B: B: if this is what your 3.5in disk drive is called). You will be prompted to swap the disks at regular intervals until the whole operation is finished.

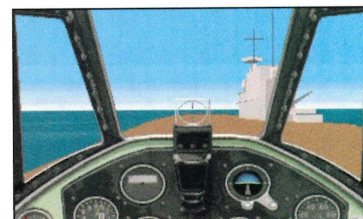
**Note:** Before attempting to use your coverdisk always make sure it is write-protected – that is, so you can see through the hole.

**Trouble shooting:** If you have any difficulties and the on-disk help hasn't saved you, you can always call the PC Action Coverdisk Helpline. This service is provided to help with any problems you may have with your coverdisks. The number to call is 0625 859675. Please note that this service is only available on a Wednesday between 3pm and 5pm.

If there is a fault with the disk itself simply return it to this address for a replacement:

PC Action faulty disks  
T.I.B. House,  
11 Edward Street,  
Bradford,  
BD4 7BH

## 1942: THE PACIFIC AIR WAR



**EXCLUSIVE!** Flight simulation supremos MicroProse have

stretched the limits of their

imagination once again to bring you an excellent demo of their newest air combat game set against the backdrop of the South Pacific.

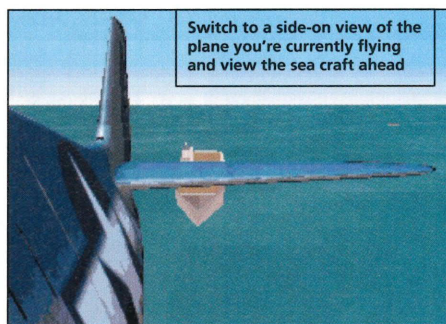
It hones in on the epic air to air and air to ground battles that raged during the second world war in this theatre and brings the reality, the danger and the seat-of-the-pants excitement straight onto the PC screen. This demo lasts over 10 minutes and illustrates, to a tee, how the game will play, look and feel.

Admire the historical authenticity of both American and Japanese planes: Zeros, Wildcats and Corsairs. See how the craft, both in lone missions and squadrons, twists and turns above the Pacific islands and over the sea based enemy craft.

And explore the innovative virtual cockpit as seen from the pilot's perspective. In the game proper the player will be able to scroll around this with the cursor, bringing the realism of the pilot's situation even closer to home.

That aside, the demo will also show you the different, and by now obligatory, exterior angles from which the aircraft can be viewed. Once you have installed the demo onto your hard drive (see panel on the left), play it by typing 1942 at the CD prompt. Then type RUNME to access the program. The demo

View the action before you from the relative comfort of the cockpit



Switch to a side-on view of the plane you're currently flying and view the sea craft ahead

will loop around when it comes to the end of its 10 minute run.

To then quit out of the program at any time just press ESCAPE and then ESCAPE again, which will return you back to the DOS prompt.

<b>PUBLISHER</b>	MicroProse	<b>CONTACT</b>	0454 326532
<b>PRICE</b>	£44.99	<b>RELEASE DATE</b>	April

### minimum loading requirements

<b>MINIMUM MEMORY</b> 580 - 590k 1.5MB EMS	<b>SOUND CARDS</b> All major sound cards
<b>MINIMUM PROCESSOR</b> 386	<b>MINIMUM GRAPHICS</b> VGA
<b>MINIMUM SPEED</b> 20MHz	<b>MINIMUM HARD DISK SPACE</b> 2.5 MB
<b>INSTALLATION</b> Essential	<b>CONTROLS</b> Not applicable



# MATCH OF THE DAY



**t**ake your team to the top in this fully playable comprehensive football management game, a game that accurately simulates the daily trials and tribulations of a modern soccer team manager. Only you can decide whether you'll end up as a Terry Vegetable or a Graham Potato...

After installing Match of the Day (see panel on the left) go to the C: prompt and type **CD MATCH**. Then type **DEMO** to play the game. To quit out of the program at any time, simply press **ESCAPE**.

Select the gamesplaying options from the set-up menu, then select the team you wish to manage. Accept your choice and you'll be taken to a view of your diary, empty at this moment in time. Timescales and tasks are entirely at your discretion so now you'll need to examine the icons on the right hand side of the screen and slot these activities in the available appointment times. To do this click on the icons and drag them over to the various morning and afternoon slots in the diary.

Once all the slots are full you can, if you wish, continue filling the subsequent

days/weeks activities by clicking on the >> icon to turn the pages of the diary. Return by clicking on the << icon. If however you'd rather get started straightaway then click on > to advance to the next event. (A little blue diamond will move to the appointment you're currently at)

Depending on which activity you've chosen a new screen will appear. If you have an appointment with the supporters club for example you'll learn of the fans' morale and their thoughts on your decisions. Should you go to the physio you are able to re-organise schedules and give some players priority treatment. Selecting team members for the next footie match is obviously high on the agenda, but so is picking the right coach, engaging in team talks and, of course, the obligatory transfers and best buys.

Juggling lots of balls in the air and a cool managerial quality will help you to build your team up. And then on Saturday afternoon you can slot the Match of the Day icon into the diary and sit back and watch Des Lynham and Jimmy Hill introduce the highlights from the League matches.

## 1. The Supporters Club

The supporters are your backbone. They have valuable opinions. Listen to what they say

## 2. Physiotherapist

The physio reports on player fitness. Organise a priority schedule if you see fit (ho ho)

## 3. Dealing

This option permits you to change club personnel. But consider the consequences. At the start of the game not all the options may be open to you. Make a little progress and the avenues will widen

## 4. Team selection

Evaluate the players. Select them on their strengths and weaknesses



## 5. Trainer

He reports on player and team abilities, whether they're on or off form

## 6. Sports pages

The tabloid press makes essential reading for hot goss and reports

## 7. Team talk

Use the right mouse button to cycle between player information

## 8. Scout

Seek out talented junior players

Consult with the physio on the fitness of the players and, if necessary, reorganise the schedule and give your orders. You're the boss



**PUBLISHER** Zeppelin Games

**CONTACT** 091 385 7755

**PRICE** £29.99

**RELEASE DATE** April

## minimum loading requirements

<b>MINIMUM MEMORY</b> 640K	<b>SOUND CARDS</b> Soundblaster and compatibles
<b>MINIMUM PROCESSOR</b> 286	<b>MINIMUM GRAPHICS</b> VGA
<b>MINIMUM SPEED</b> 20MHz	<b>MINIMUM HARD DISK</b> 1 MB
<b>INSTALLATION</b> Essential	<b>CONTROLS</b> Mouse



**i**f you have a copy of the PC Action limited edition Interactive Gold CD-Rom cover mounted magazine this month, then read on. If you have the floppy disk version, then maybe it would still be wise to read on, if not to see just what you're missing. A whopping 360MB of PC gaming action is stuffed onto this CD. The mix ranges from exclusive demos of forthcoming games to highly playable slices of releases just hitting the market. Please note, the CD may not work on older CD drive models.

## HOW TO USE YOUR COVER CD

### How to use your CD:

Place the CD in the CD disk drive. This is usually D but could also be E, or any other letter in fact. Type D: (or the appropriate letter) and then type PCA and press RETURN. The PC Action logo will flash on the screen and then you'll be presented with a list of all of the 17 glorious games that we have to show you.

Use the Up and Down keyboard cursor arrows to highlight the program you wish to play/watch and then hit RETURN to select. If the game is a CD-Rom game then a message on screen will tell you so. If not then you must install this program to your hard disk.

Once selected a new menu will appear with four options, 1, 2, 3 or 4. Usually all you need to do is select the number 1 and the program will automatically install. If however you want to change your mind then the other options: 2, 3 and 4 allow you to do so.

Once the program is installed a screen appears explaining what the game is about. Press Y to continue and N to return to the menu. After the program has installed and finished running you will be informed on how to run it for another time. Make a note of the details and key them in to run

## INFERNO

Ocean

Requires a 386 and 580K

An amazing watchable demo featuring some incredible alienesque animations. Prepare to be astounded. The smoothness and imagination of the game are beyond comparison.

To escape from the demo press ESCAPE and then SHIFT/Q



## TORNADO

Digital Integration

Playable. Requires 580K

One for the serious flight sim buff. An astoundingly accurate representation of flying a craft and engaging in tactical low level bombing over the Gulf

## WIZARD

Psygnosis

A playable demo that needs EMS to play, 580K of base memory and a mouse

Enter a dungeon world populated with wizards and warriors. Guide a party via the mouse or cursor keys. Collect objects by positioning the mouse over them so that it turns into a grasping hand. Click the right mouse button to pick up the objects. Sword fight by clicking the left mouse button on the crossed swords. Find your way...





## PREMIER MANAGER 2

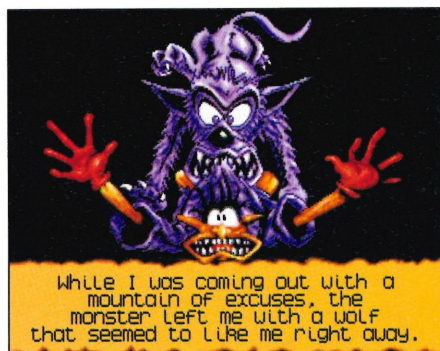
**Gremlin Graphics**

*A playable demo. Requires 580K. Reboot the computer to quit out of the program*  
Manage a football team by juggling statistics. Click on the whistle to start the game and then experiment by clicking on the icons to bring up different charts and then interact with the players

## ACES OF THE DEEP

**Sierra**

*A demo requiring 580K memory. Reboot to quit the program*  
From Dynamix, an indication of the next in the 'Aces of' series



## GOBLINS 3

**Coktel Vision**

*Playable. An error occurs upon loading this program. Press TAB and then follow the on screen instructions*  
Lots of quirky humour abounds as you happen across one daft click and point puzzle after another

## OUTPOST

**Sierra**

*Non playable. Remove EMM386 to run*  
A game that's raised many eyebrows of late. Based on NASA research it deals with the inhabitation of space colonies and looks absolutely beautiful

## QUEST FOR GLORY 4

**Sierra**

*An error is reported. Ignore it and follow instructions. Reboot to quit the program*  
An adventure-cum-role-play game in which our hero takes to mystical lands

## GABRIEL KNIGHT

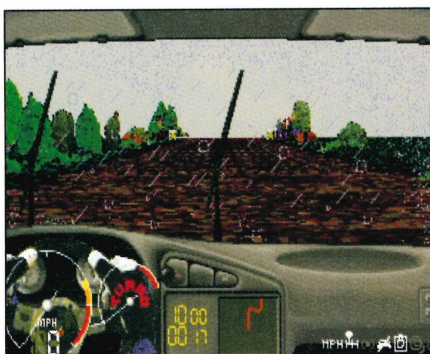
**Sierra**

*Playable. Needs a mouse and 605K RAM*  
Steeped in myth and voodoo, this is a graphic click and point adventure game of true noteworthiness. Manoeuvre your way around the atmospheric screens, picking up objects that you find en route and talking to the host of characters you meet in the streets and buildings to glean clues as to where to move to next. Of course cunning and intrigue play a big part in the proceedings

## LEMMINGS 2

**Psynosis**

*Playable. Requires 600K and a mouse*  
Hugely popular, you guide a motley bunch of dumbos around a motley bunch of screens. On the bottom of the screen are the icons. Choose the action you wish your Lemming to do. Click on the critter in question. And go for it. You need to rescue a certain percentage to proceed to the next screen



## NETWORK Q RAC RALLY

**Europress Software**

*Playable. Requires 580K*  
A simulation of the Rally race. Foot to the pedal, test your driving skills

## INCA II

**Coktel Vision**

*Rolling demo. Needs 580K. Reboot to quit the program*  
A flight adventure game that couples spectacular land and space graphics

## CYBERRACE

**Cyber Dreams**

*Playable. Needs 580K. This game must be copied to A:\. Remove memory manager though to play*  
Inspired by futurist Syd Mead, embark on a fantasy roller coaster of a ride



## DIGGERS

**Millennium**

*Playable. Needs a mouse and 580K*  
Four wee miners get digging in the mining labyrinths of the planet Zarg. The Master Action of a Digger is shown on the control panel. This will either be blank, a small spade (digging) and magnifying glass (search) or a

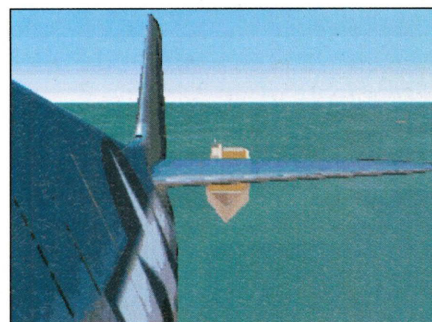
standing Digger (wait). Manoeuvre the Diggers left and right and select the action you wish them to pursue, ie. select dig right and then run right to make a digger run to the right and dig into the first wall he hits. The goal is to collect valuable gems and annihilate your foes



## MATCH OF THE DAY

**Zeppelin Games**

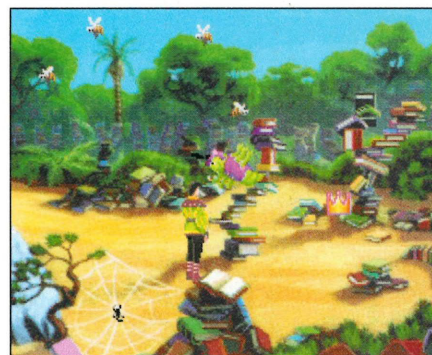
*Playable. Needs a mouse and 580K*  
A football management game. See the cover disk page on the previous page for further details on how to play



## 1942 THE PACIFIC AIR WAR

**MicroProse**

*Program must be installed. Select Install, select other, press Return twice*  
A visually stunning treat. Follow the thrill of South Pacific dog fighting in World War II



## KING'S QUEST 6

**Sierra**

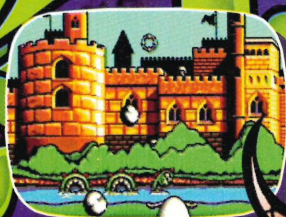
*This game requires Windows 3.1, 4MEG RAM and a SoundBlaster card to play*  
A sweet fantasy adventure. Point and click your way around the screen, talk to characters, solve puzzles, explore new locations. Seek and ye shall find...



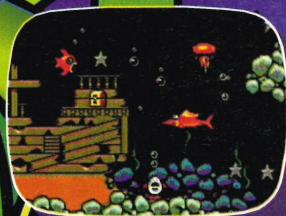
# FANTASTIC DIZZY



TREEHOUSE SURVIVAL



CASTLE ATTACK



SHIP WRECKED

**"It's exciting, puzzling, well presented, hopelessly addictive - sure to be a winner" 90%**

Sega Pro magazine  
(MEGA DRIVE)



DRAGON'S LAIR



SPOOKY! CLOUD CASTLE

**"A neat combination of platform fun and clever puzzles"**

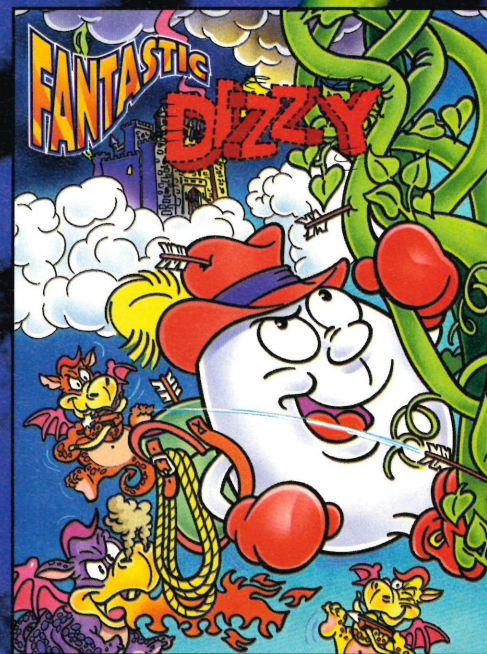
Sega Power magazine

**"A superb adventure - plenty of puzzles and great satisfaction" 92%**

Sega Pro magazine



**He's here! Dizzy is in full action in a huge arcade adventure! Explore the magical kingdom of Zakeria, Palm Tree beach, medieval towns, haunted graveyards, the troll palace and many more exciting and mysterious realms! Meet the strangest people, creatures and monsters in this most excellent adventure! It's all here in the award winning adventure of a lifetime!**



**LICENSED BY SEGA ENTERPRISES FOR PLAY ON THE: MEGA DRIVE. GAME GEAR SYSTEM. MASTER SYSTEM. ALSO AVAILABLE ON: AMIGA. IBM PC. NES\*.**

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:  
Codemasters Software Company Limited, Stoneythorpe, Southam, Warwickshire, CV33 0DL, U.K.

## Codemasters™

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# THE WORD

**Right:** Sensible Software have really got into the spirit of war, especially with the release of Cannon Fodder which is due out very soon



## Virgin soldiers

**S**ensible Software have been voted the leading UK development team by the computer games industry for the past two years running. Virgin Interactive is currently games publisher of the year. The ties have now been cemented further and, combined, they're destined to become an explosive force in '94 and '95.

Cannon Fodder, reviewed in this issue, is a conversion of the Amiga classic and Virgin have since clinched the rights to publish the SNES and Mega Drive versions.

Further down the line though is where the interest really starts to hot up with Virgin signing up the next sports simulation from Sensible Software. This will be Sensible Golf, a game to be released both on the Amiga and PC in the last quarter of '94 and surely one to build on the reputation of Sensible Soccer. Details of the game are as yet still vague but PC Action will update you with more news as it breaks.

*'They (Virgin) have always put the product first and share our obsession with quality. We're both determined to make the next generation of Sensible product the best yet'*

JON HARE, MD OF SENSIBLE SOFTWARE

**Calling all TV thespans...** Virtual Reality is once more opening its doors with the return of a new series of the TV show Knightmare. If you are in the 11-16 age bracket, are a keen gamesplayer and have three friends who also qualify to make up a challenge team, then the vast computerised catacombs that draw you to a Virtual adventure quest may be just the enticement you need. Broadsword Television is awaiting a fresh batch of hopefuls for this show and also for another role-playing TV experience which will be called Virtually Impossible. In this scenario gamers will become suspended in a Virtual Reality Experience as a hostile world of computer games becomes a gruelling obstacle course.

Potentially interested contestants should send a stamped addressed envelope to TV Games, Broadsword Television, Anglia House, Norwich NR1 3JG for an application form. Forms need to be returned before the 31st March.



**Right:** Deep concentration is required to get to grips with those computer pixels

## Sounds Compatible

**a** sixteen-bit sound card that offers CD quality sound and has built-in CD-Rom interfaces for Panasonic and Mitsumi with an optional upgrade for Sony is Silica's latest offering. Made by Aztech Labs, the Sound Galaxy Basic 16 offers full compatibility with all major sound cards and also comes bundled with 14 software titles that incorporate an array of utilities for mixing, sampling, playing back and creating sounds. The card retails for £99 excluding VAT.

For further details tel: 081 309 1111.



## This Ishar strategy

**f**antasy-RPG-strategy-adventure, rolled into one complete whole, mixed and matched, is the image and hence the appeal that Silmarils aim to consolidate with their range of games. Founded in 1987 by the Rocque brothers, the company has seen success after success with a steady stream of releases that have as their cornerstone a commitment to pure RPGing and adventuring. Ishar: Legend of the Fortress and Ishar 2: Messengers of Doom took us into demonic sorcery stuffed lands. But the story does not end there. **Ishar 3** will take up on the journey and weave its mysteries around us with threads and sub plots actually within the main quest itself.

In the world of Ishar every character (there are over 100 to choose from) has his/her own idiosyncrasies, the success of the team the player picks depending on complementing strengths with weaknesses.

Animated film sequences, richly designed landscapes and locations - temples, casinos, jungles - and quantum leap time travel will be just some of the ingredients to savour and the game will be as user friendly as possible with auto-mapping and unlimited save game facilities, even allowing gamers to reload teams from the two previous Ishar games.

Time is the key in this latest reincarnation. The plot itself revolves around you passing through a series of time gates and travelling back in time to arrive at key plot points. The adage about being at the right place at the right time could never be more appropriate and only by yo yo-ing around this very special kingdom will it be possible to ultimately destroy the dragon, the source of all evil in the game world.

Ishar III is to be released by Daze Marketing in April.



## Noctropolis

Right: Digitised characters are frighteningly real

Below: One of the pages from Darksheer's comic book world

Far Right: Fiction becomes fact as you are sucked into the pages

Although an increasing number of arcade and console-esque releases are beginning to seep through onto the PC platform, the home computer is first and foremost firmly pointed towards the mature market.

Electronic Arts are now hoping to create their own niche in adult entertainment. And we're not talking about sexually explicit material or untoward violence here, but focusing more on themes linked with dark and surreal landscapes and heinous characters. *Noctropolis* will be the first in the vein of sophisticated adventures.

Ensnared in the futuristic world of Darksheer, an enigmatic and mystical environment, we enter into a comic book world. Here the player idolises famed comic super heroes, namely Darksheer and Stiletto. Upon discovering that the former is scheduled to be phased out he mysteriously receives a 'limited edition' continuation of the series.

A perusal through the colourful pages and he suddenly finds himself sucked into this comic book world where a band of anti-heroes are in the throes of trying their hardest to come through to the real world (emulating the Super Mario film to some degree).

An epic point and click adventuring struggle thus ensues within the confines of this sinister

city with the player collaborating with Stiletto to overthrow the enemy. The graphics look absolutely stunning and are certainly pretty unique in that each in-game character is taken from raw video footage and then translated into a digital representation onto 256 colour hand painted backdrops.

By this method we're treated to life like character interaction and movement, yet at the same time can still experience that fantasy feel through the painted landscapes and locations. Digitized speech and a sound score will further enhance the atmosphere.

*Noctropolis* is currently looking forward to a late spring release both on floppy and CD-Rom formats from Electronic Arts.

***The story is much more telling, much richer and much more akin to what you would find in a professional Hollywood film'***

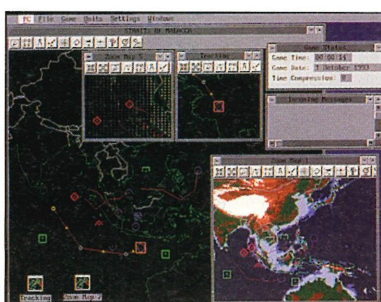
JEFF LEE, NOCTROPOLIS PRODUCER

## Wing Commander III

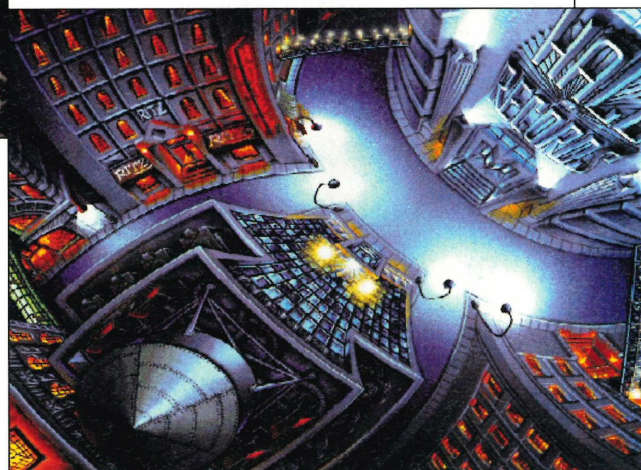
It's on its way at long last! The last quarter of '94 is looking to be the release date, but already Chris Roberts and his Origin team have been out scouring the west coast of America to secure a number of appropriate locations in which to film live action video portions for the game.

It is hoped that it will be seen as being not only an adventure, but also a simulation. And it will be orchestrated in such a way that it will fully utilise both different and unusual camera angles and cinematic moves such as pans and zooms to allow for greater freedom of movement.

Below: A simplified interface allows for much easier gameplay



***The naval combat game Harpoon is to be given a new lease of life. Harpoon II will include a brand new user interface, new sensor and logistic models and an increased flexibility as regards mapping routines. An intelligent artificial opponent will juice gameplay up and each new Battleset is able to refer to a number of scenarios worldwide. Harpoon II is scheduled for an early April release from Electronic Arts.***



## Computer design degree

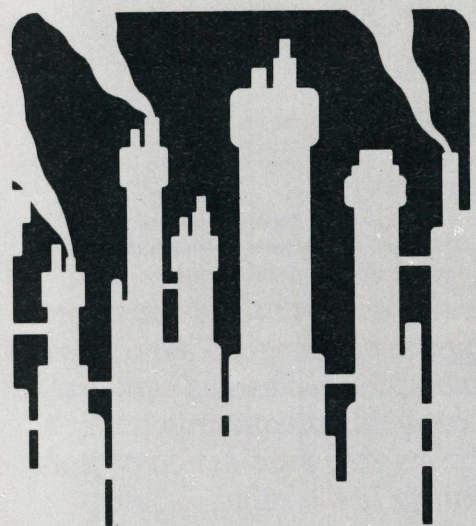
Games designers are a curious breed. But they're not limitless. In the embryonic computer game days they learnt their indefinable trade at home on the home computer before then displaying their labours of love to publishers and praying for a deal in some form or another.

The problem nowadays though is that more youngsters are turning to the consoles and as a knock on effect less are experimenting with programming. If the industry is avant garde enough to not get into a rut, if it is not to simply regurgitate software and ideas, then some new blood is definitely needed for the future generation.

Running training programmes within software houses proves to be expensive and so a new process of recruitment has been sourced, a consequence of which is the beginning of a new university programme in October, the new college year. Russell Ferrier, international development manager at Domark has been the leading force behind this initiative and Sega too have agreed to become involved in lectures and initiate work placements.

The Bachelor and Master's degrees will be 'The Design and Production of Interactive Games' and Middlesex University have jumped at the chance of being the first of hopefully many more institutions to get this new art form off the ground and stimulate talent and originality that may otherwise go unperceived.





# BENEATH A STEEL SKY

## FEATURING...

REVOLUTION'S INNOVATIVE VIRTUAL THEATRE SYSTEM AND STUNNING ARTWORK FROM AWARD-WINNING COMIC-BOOK ARTIST DAVE GIBBONS, BENEATH A STEEL SKY IS A GRIPPING SCIENCE FICTION THRILLER SET IN A BLEAK VISION OF THE FUTURE.

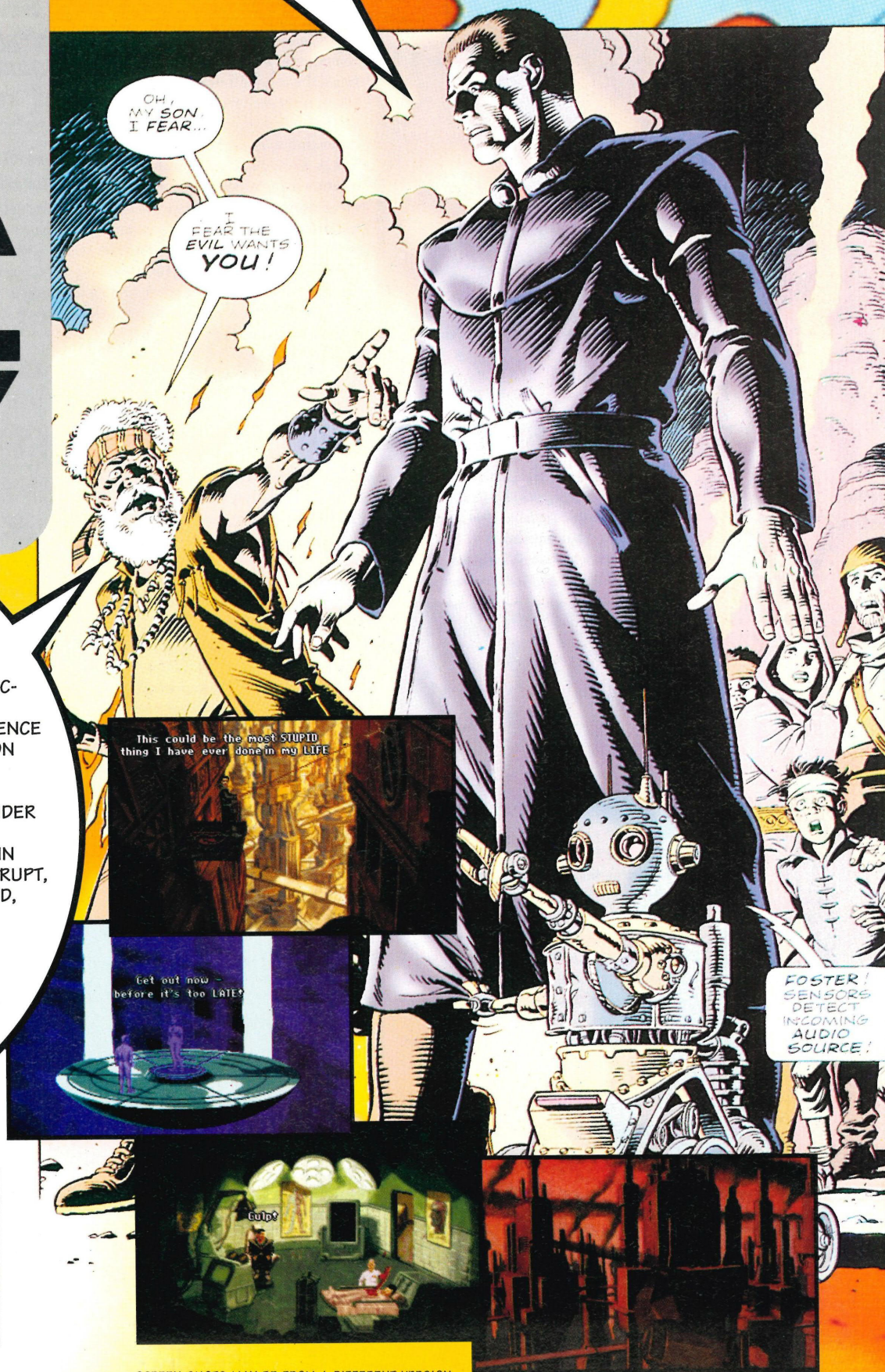
ROBERT FOSTER IS AN INNOCENT OUTSIDER STRANDED IN A VAST CITY WHERE OPPRESSED CIVILIANS LIVE AND WORK IN SOARING TOWER BLOCKS... WHILE THE CORRUPT, COVETOUS AND RICH LIE UNDERGROUND, SHIELDED FROM ALL POLLUTION.

ALONE, SAVE FOR A ROBOT CIRCUIT BOARD, FOSTER MUST FIGHT FOR SURVIVAL... AND DISCOVER THE SINISTER TRUTH BEHIND HIS ABDUCTION!



**PC GAMER 91%**  
"A must buy for all serious adventure fans."

**PC PLAYER 4/5**  
"I recommend this game to all adventurers..."  
"...it's a great game plain and simple."

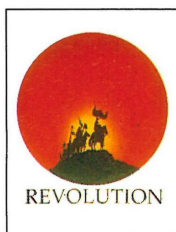


This could be the most STUPID thing I have ever done in my LIFE

Get out now - before it's too LATE!

FOSTER! SENSORS DETECT INCOMING AUDIO SOURCE!

Virgin



SCREEN SHOTS MAY BE FROM A DIFFERENT VERSION



Right: Detailed screens compliment the detail of activity required

Below: Start slowly and build up the traces of a magnificent empire



## Space Federation

**T**he game that until the past couple of weeks has been bandied about as Star Reach has since come of space age and changed its monicker to Space Federation. This, supposedly, reflects more of its strategic approach as Interplay take the theme of trading in the inky blackness of the outer hemispheres and adapt it to suit their, and hopefully gamers' worldwide, needs. Players will have the opportunity

to battle each other or alternatively the computer in a pulsating race that has as its finale the conquest of the galaxy.

With real time simultaneous action you will have thrown upon you the power of commanding a vast fleet of space craft and troops. Decisions to make include how to colonise planets, how to get the economy up and running to satisfactory levels and how to best meet the odds in space combat. A wealth of options open up the deeper you get into the game. Build a community perched above the icy wastes of a previously deserted planet, secure a homeplace not unlike Earth's, even capture a mineral based planet solely for the killing you can make on its natural resources. Flex your mind, bend your reflexes, and prepare to take the plunge.

*Space Federation is going to be another of Interplay's babies come April of this year.*

***'It's the perfect mix of action and depth. It challenges both a player's mind and reflexes and that makes it extremely unique in a market where either pure action or pure strategy is the rage'***

TOM DECKER, PRODUCER OF SPACE FEDERATION



## Shock to the system

**A** bad case of Cyberpunk is raging through several of the latest adventure releases. Empire's role-playing board game tie-in Cyberspace is easily confused with Syd Mead's futuristic Formula One, CyberRace. So Origin have called their recce into this virtual world **System Shock**.

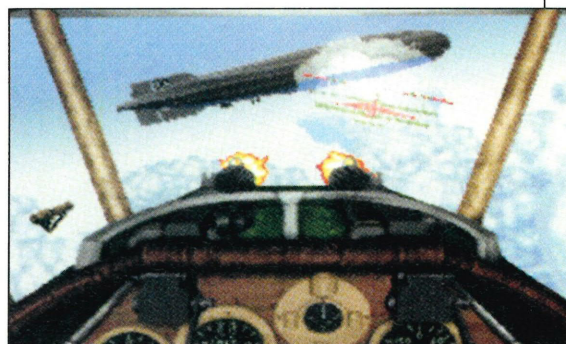
The sci-fi Cyberspace world was defined by cyber-guru William Gibson in Neuromancer as 'a graphic representation of data abstracted from the banks of every computer in the human system.'

You 'jack' into Cyberspace in System Shock using your neural interface and steal clues about the powerful computer, Shodan, which has taken over the space station Citadel.

There's also an element of that other sci-fi nightmare, biological engineering, since all your companions on the space station

have been mutated beyond recognition to serve the computer. And world-creators Origin just had to add the ultimate sci-fi ambition, the plot to enslave the Earth as the terrible ending which you have to avert.

The accomplished first person perspective we have come to expect from the latest interactive sci-fi adventures is layered with light effects, with flickering and flashing pools of light and shade, bringing the endless corridors of the space station to life. It's altogether a most sophisticated system, that peeps into the future and allows you infra-red vision, homing cameras and a vast arsenal of weapons.



***No laser missiles*** in sight, no tractor beams or shields. In fact you don't even have a radio. For you are one of those magnificent men in their flying machines, back in the days of dogfighting, in 1917-18 to be precise and that's what Origin's *Wings of Glory* is about - precisely reproducing that historical experience. To this end they give you the chance of flying in one of five British or American First World War planes, namely the Sopwith Pup, Sopwith Camel, SE5a, SPAD XIII or the Fokker Dr. I. It will even sound like an old plane, with four channel digital sound, while Origin's RealSpace graphic's engine generates fluffy clouds and trees around you. Of course this is no airshow spin, and real missions take you into the path of German Hunter Squadrons. Ultimately you get the chance to deflate a Zeppelin. Jolly good! *Wings of Glory 1917-18* will be doggedly fighting your way in March from E.A.

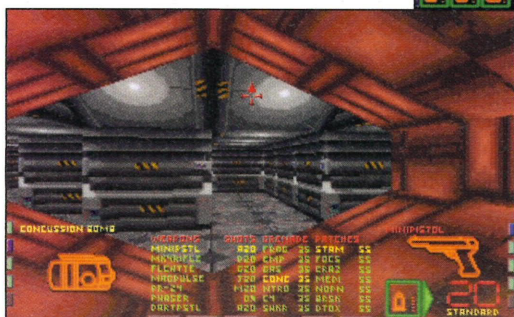


Right and below: You're wandering round a space station minding your own business and who should you come across but some mutant lifeform. Shoot first. Ask questions later

Far Right: For the ultimate simple thrill, shoot down an airship in *Wings of Glory*

Wait for a big shock to the system from Origin in April.

# WORD







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LOWEST PRICES**

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# REUNION



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**BATTLE COMMANDERS**

## THE GREATEST VOYAGE OF ALL HAS BEGUN

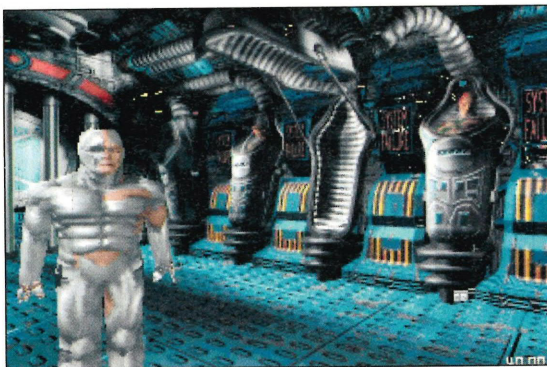
- "REUNION GIVES LUCASARTS A RUN FOR THEIR MONEY!! - WHOEVER BUYS THIS GAME WON'T BE DISAPPOINTED" - DAVE WESTLEY - PC POWER
- "HAS DEPTH AND PLAYABILITY - WE RECOMMEND IT" - MARK BURGESS - PC ZONE
- "BEAUTIFULLY PRESENTED AND ABSORBING SPACE ODYSSEY - YOU CANT STOP PLAYING IT" - 92% GURU
- "ABSOLUTELY ENORMOUS AND YOU BECOME SO INVOLVED THE HOURS JUST WHITTLE AWAY" - PETE HAWLEY - PC ACTION
- "VISUALLY SUPERB AND POSSESSES BAGS OF CHARACTER" - DAREN ALLAN - PC ACTION
- "A BRILLIANT SPACE COLONISATION SIMULATION FOR SCIENCE FICTION STRATEGISTS" - 85% HIT - MANFRED DUY - PC JOKER
- "A STRATEGY GAME THAT BREAKS NEW GROUND, A CHALLENGE NOT TO BE MISSED. BUY IT!" - DEREK DELA FUENTE - ASM+SKY, SATELLITE TIMES

Available on: IBM PC + COMPATIBLES + AMIGA



## BioForge

**a** new generation of interactive movies is inching its big toe across the threshold of the PC games arena this Spring, not least of which is **BioForge**. First impressions are of the 'wow' variety. The visuals are quite spectacular and it would appear that just as much, if not more, detail is being paid to the plot and storyline to give a true interactive feel to the whole caboodle that, sadly, has been missing in similar expeditions.



*Right: The hero of this particular show is Lex, a true adventuring stalwart*

*Below: Locations are lavishly depicted throughout the game as Lex wanders about the city, solving puzzles and engaging in derring-do battles with the enemy afoot*

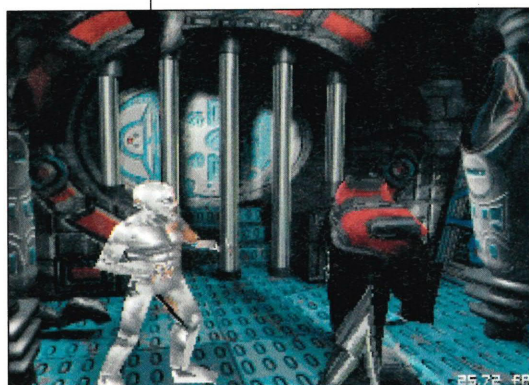
You play a half man/half robot called Lex whose memory has been wiped clean. You must take control of his destiny and embark on a frenzied journey that involves travelling from a cellblock, through an alien city and even on to outer space. Running parallel with this gamut of locations is the graphical splendour of the whole package. The 3D world is painstakingly brought to life, your robot's metallic body casts reflections on the machinery and pools of water around him and camera angles switch from above to below to cutaways to give a true cinematic quality and spontaneity to proceedings.

Lex's movements, over which you have full control rather than being a mere spectator, consist of 1,000s of frames of lifelike animation as he runs, fights and falls from scene to scene. To further accentuate the paciness and depth of BioForge, the plot and pace are critical. The music and sound FX will play a very special part too. Noises become louder the nearer they are to the cameras and all the soundtracks are action sensitive. And are there any drawbacks? Well, as in many Origin products, you'll need a top of the range 486 to get maximum enjoyment, not to mention a recommended 8MB RAM.

*Bioforge is set for a wee screen debut from Electronic Arts in the Summer time.*

*'Not all our products will be interactive movies, but those that are will fall within certain parameters. The challenge is to continue the evolution'*

RICHARD GARRIOTT, THE CREATIVE DIRECTOR OF ORIGIN



**Datrontech's recently** established multimedia division called Upgrade Options has just shipped a new 16-bit Media Vision sound card aimed to take advantage of the company's unrivalled success in the SCSI market with their existing cards. This latest arrival comes bundled with pocket tools, 16-bit stereo simultaneous playback and record, a MIDI interface, 4:1 sound compression and is also fully Soundblaster and Soundblaster Pro compatible. The card is available through authorised Datrontech resellers and the recommended retail price is £89.

## Play by wire

**M**odem use for the purpose of multi-player games playing is becoming more and more prolific in the States.

In the UK going on-line can amount to parting with quite a small fortune, but, should you wish to find out a little bit more about this facility and the opportunities that exist, then you could do far worse than turn to **The Sportster Guide to On-Line Services** which is published by data communications company US Robotics.

This guide, which incidentally is free, explores a wealth of on-line services accompanied by a special section on the growing number of bulletin boards, membership rates and games operators set up for the purpose of entertainment across the telephone network.

To obtain free copies of the book, contact US Robotics on: 0753 811180

## WORD

### S.U.B.

**t**hree quarters of the world's surface is covered by water. Under these seas and oceans lies a dark and mysterious world filled with limitless possibilities largely uncharted by man. Until now that is!

**Strategic Underwater Battles** plumbs these depths in a post apocalyptic world of vast underwater cities. S.U.B. has you deep sea diving into an advanced society of complex trading networks and marine technology where you mine ore, oil and gems and buy and develop cargo ships, war ships and transporters.

And this is all in preparation for the day when you will invent the technology necessary to escape the earth's imminent destruction. Oops have we really spoilt it for you now!

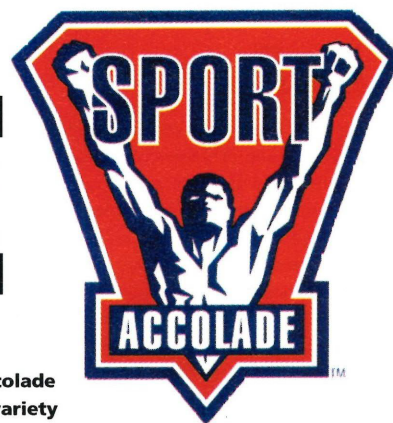
Micros, Nessies and Whales are used to transport goods for trading while you establish bases for your developing empire and fight off increasing numbers of pirates in warships called Rayas.

After weeks submerged in this high pressure atmosphere and with the advances made in the laboratories, your platoon will then be feeling strong enough to take on your neighbours and make an aquatic megalomaniac bid to rule the ocean floor.

*Thalamus Software's S.U.B. should be ship shape and ready to torpedo our shores this month.*



# TOUCHDOWN



**To celebrate the launch of Accolade's sporting label, aptly named 'Accolade Sports', we present a competition which offers our lucky winners a variety of sporting goodies and five runners-up prizes.**

Accolade has signed up some of the most exciting sport stars to put their names to the games that they are bringing out. From the ghettos to multi-millionaire, Charles Barkley is the new golden boy of the NBA. Tough ice-man Brett Hull launches an ice hockey simulation and from the fairway comes the 'white shark' himself Jack Nicklaus in a superb golf simulation.

If you are into American sports, then the goodies up for grabs in this competition are the stuff dreams are made of. Hit the endzone in a blaze of rotoscoped glory in the critically acclaimed Unnecessary Roughness, so real even the cheerleaders are included. Cross check, rough and body slam your opponent into the rink walls with Brett Hull's Hockey and perform back-board breaking reverse slam dunks with the main man himself, Charles Barkley. If all this violence sounds a little overbearing, that's because it is – we wouldn't have it any other way.

The main prize includes an exclusive Accolade Jacket, a basket board and basketball, a Brett Hull t-shirt which comes in the shape of an ice hockey puck, a Charles Barkley t-shirt, copies of American Football spectacular Unnecessary Roughness, Charles Barkley 'Shut-up 'n' Jam' and Brett Hull Ice Hockey. All in all a veritable box of goodies which could be yours.

Runners up prizes include five copies of Charles Barkley, five Brett Hull and five Unnecessary Roughness.



The graphics on the field make this the most visually exciting sports game ever



1. What sports do these teams compete in?

Chicago Bulls –

Miami Dolphins –

St Louis Blues –

2. Match up these sport stars with their respective sports: –

Shaq O'Neal –

Dan Marino –

Wayne Gretzky –

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Age:

action  
PC



## We're On the Ball

Right: A wealth of football management games are On The Ball this season. Just how favourable will Daze's strategy compare?

inevitably, the current line-up of aspiring football management games will all be compared with the chart-topping Premier Manager 2, and German development team Ascon's *On The Ball* is one that sizes up favourably.

Where complaints about Gremlin's comprehensive PM2 have centred around the in-game coverage, *On the Ball* features Match of the Day style highlights and running, 'often humorous'

commentary. Animation is from scanned watercolours, with special camera angles for shots, goals, penalties, fouls, corners and injuries.

'Most football management games are wonderful from a purist point of view because they are full of detailed statistics,' says marketing manager Cliff Guy of Daze. 'Others have the action. What *On the Ball* does is combine both aspects.'

The action is said to be re-calculated every 60 seconds and you have a real chance to do a 'Graham Taylor' from the touchline and then explain yourself in a television interview after the match.

The mid-price game embraces a wide range of venables, sorry variables. As well as the usual financial, tactical and development concerns, you take on more of a coaching role, with 11 training modes including special camps and the opportunity to influence individual players' attitudes. And success could lead to you managing the national team. If you don't get done for fraud that is!



## Arcade Pool

We all enjoy a friendly game of pool down at our local public house, pint in hand and surrounded by a bunch of mates. Team 17's *Arcade Pool* is designed around this image of the average pool playing punter but there's certainly a lot more to it than that.

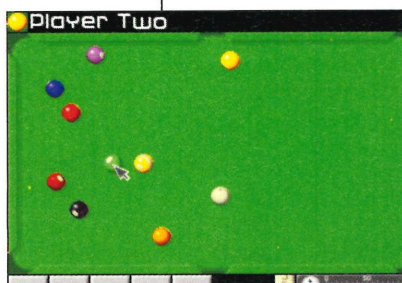
The arcade-inspired game is remarkably flexible. You can play solo against one of 32 computer generated opponents, with eight, nine or 8/15 balls or take part in a tournament with up to seven friends or you can set up trick shots or various challenges. 'Killer is a particular favourite here when we go down to the pub,' says Martyn Brown of Team 17, explaining one of the game's variations. 'One person goes to the table and has to sink a ball, any ball. If they don't then they are out and the last person remaining is the winner.'

But the real beauty of this simulator is its simplicity, says Martyn: 'It's based on versions appearing in the arcades, but it's very easy to play at the same time.' With this point and click interface you just aim, specify the strength of your shot and then watch the realistic ball movement and listen to the sound effects digitised from an actual game. You'll even hear some real

applause if you make a great pot.

The game takes its cue from the Amiga version, written by an Italian pool fanatic. Team 17 were so impressed by the 'slick gameplay' they immediately set to work on a conversion. And with the friendly price tag of £19.99 it looks set to clear up on the PC.

Keep your tip well chalked for *Arcade Pool's* release some time in April.



Below: A PC neglected gentle sport is about to be resurrected

Quality  
&  
CHOICE...

You  
need  
to...





*What's hot and what's not in the PC gaming charts, on floppy and CD based formats, is a topic of much debate. PC Action now, courtesy of Gallup and Elspa, gives you the pleasure of perusing the PC titles hitting the headlines this month. Along with this comes a complete update of the releases that are expected over the coming months...*

## Top 20 budget releases

1. Sim City 2000 demo disk	Mindscape	£2.99
2. Monkey Island	Kixx	£16.99
3. Wing Commander	Hit Squad	£14.99
4. Eye of the Beholder	Kixx	£16.99
5. Championship Manager '94 Data Disk	Domark	£9.99
6. Another World	Kixx	£14.99
7. Links - The Challenge of Golf	Kixx	£16.99
8. Populous and Promised Lands	Hit Squad	£14.99
9. Fun school 2 Under 6	Hit Squad	£9.99
10. De-luxe Trivial Pursuit	Hit Squad	£14.99
11. Speed Ball 2	Kixx	£9.99
12. Police Quest 1	Kixx	£16.99
13. Trolls	Micro Value	£9.99
14. Fun School 2 6-8 Years	Hit Squad	£9.99
15. Powermonger	Hit Squad	£14.99
16. Fun School 2 over 8s	Hit Squad	£9.99
17. Cruise for a Corpse	Kixx	£14.99
18. Xmas Lemmings	Psygnosis	£14.99
19. Magic Land Dizzy	Codemasters	£14.99
20. RoboCop 3	Hit Squad	£14.99

## Top 20 Floppy charts

1. SimCity 2000	Mindscape/Maxis	£39.99
2. Alone in the Dark 2	Infogrames	£44.99
3. Premier Manager 2	Gremlin Graphics	£34.99
4. Frontier: Elite 2	Gametek	£39.99
5. TFX	Ocean	£44.99
6. Microsoft Flight Simulator V.5	Microsoft	£39.99
7. Star Trek: Judgement Rites	Interplay	£44.99
8. Sam and Max - Hit the Road	US Gold	£42.99
9. IndyCar Racing	Virgin	£44.99
10. X-Wing	US Gold	£45.99
11. Zool	Gremlin Graphics	£34.99
12. Civilization	MicroProse	£39.99
13. Premier Manager	Gremlin Graphics	£29.99
14. Sensible Soccer 92/93	Renegade/Mindscape	£32.99
15. B-Wing	US Gold	£20.99
16. Subwar 2050	MicroProse	£44.99
17. Network Q RAC Rally	Europress Software	£34.99
18. Indiana Jones - Fate of Atlantis	US Gold	£30.99
19. Kingmaker	US Gold	£37.99
20. Links 386 Pro	US Gold	£45.99

## Top 10 CD charts

1. Rebel Assault	US Gold	£45.99
2. Gabriel Knight	Sierra On-line	£44.99
3. Iron Helix	MicroProse	£39.99
4. Day of the Tentacle	US Gold	£45.99
5. Wolfpack	Novalogic	£29.99
6. The Lawnmower Man	Storm	£54.99
7. The Journeyman Project	Gametek	£39.99
8. Comanche: Maximum Overkill	Novalogic	£49.99
9. Dracula Unleashed	Mindscape	£49.99
10. TFX	Ocean	£49.99

## CD release schedule

Mech Warrior II	Activision	Action	March
Shadow Caster	Electronic Arts RPG		April
Space Hulk	Electronic Arts Action		April
Chaos Control	Infogrames	Action	April
Shadow of The Comet	Infogrames	Adv	April
Star Trek	Interplay	Adv	March
Mega Race	Mindscape	Driving	March
Dragon Tales	Mindscape	Adv	June
Inferno	Ocean	Space Sim	April
Central Intelligence	Ocean	Strategy	May
11th Hour	Virgin	Puzzle	May

## PC release schedule

Mechwarrior 2: The Clan	Activision	Action	May
Graham Gooch Cricket	Audiogenic	Sport	March
F1	Domark	Racing	April
Forgotten Castle	Electronic Arts	RPG	TBA
Pacific Strike	Electronic Arts	Simulation	March
Theme Park	Electronic Arts	Strategy	May
Dreamweb	Empire	Adventure	March
Rocket Rescue	Hot Shot Ent.	Platform	April
Breach 3	Impressions	Strategy	March
Detroit	Impressions	Strategy	April
Dungeon Master 2	Interplay	RPG	June
Space Federation	Interplay	Strategy	April
Stonekeep	Interplay	Adventure	March
Star Trek: TNG	MicroProse	Graphic Adv	April
1942 Pacific Air War	MicroProse	Flight Sim	April
Dragonsphere	MicroProse	Adv	March
Genesis	Mindscape	God Sim	March
Rise of the Robots	Mirage	Beat-'em-up	March
Magician's Castle	Psygnosis	Adv	June
The Chaos Engine	Renegade	Arcade	May
Aces of the Deep	Sierra	Simulation	April
Outpost	Sierra	Space Sim	April
Battledrome-Metal Tech	Sierra	Adv	March
Arcade Pool	Team 17	Sports Sim	April
Overdrive	Team 17	Car Sim	June
Superfrog	Team 17	Platform	March
Delta V	US Gold	Arcade/Sim	March
Under a Killing Moon	US Gold	Adv	March
Tie-fighter	US Gold	Flight Sim	April
Evolution: Lost in Time	US Gold	Puzzle	April
D-Day Overlord	Virgin	Flight Sim	May



# Make the Connexion



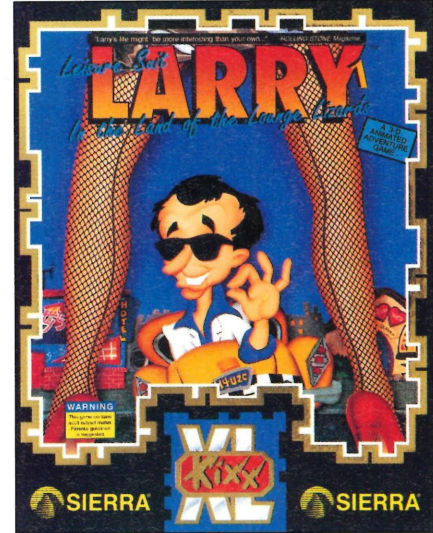
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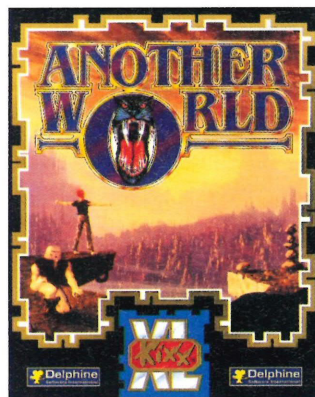
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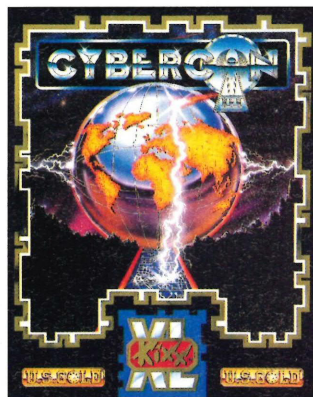
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Also available Leisure Suit Larry 2™  
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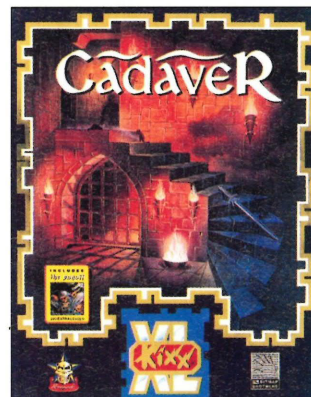
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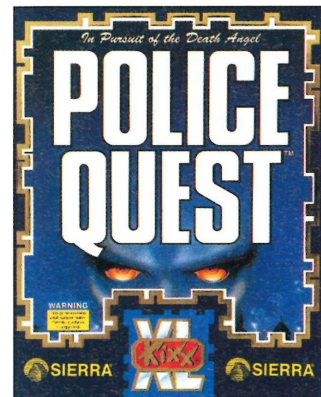
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## ▲ Cadaver/Payoff

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Compatibles 3.5" RRP £14.99



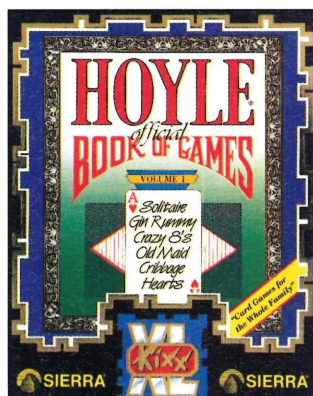
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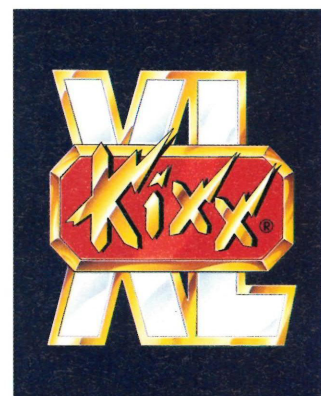
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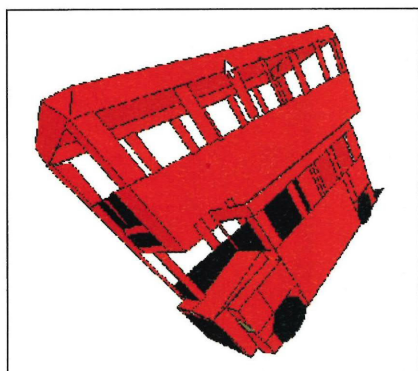


# INSIDEWORD

*Entertainment by design. With the launch of the Hanna-Barbera Animation Workshop and Card Shop Plus, we see design becoming an important resource for the future of PC games*

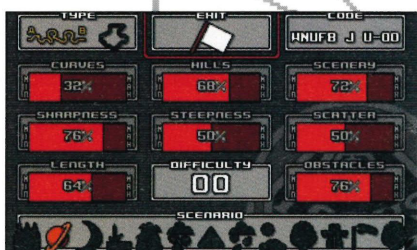
*Right: Flight Sim Took Kit and its wonderful flying machines*

*Far Right: Popular animation from Hanna-Barbera*



Everything has to be designed, as Paul Smith was telling us on last month's design awards. Magazines, newspapers, books, catalogues, towels, curtains, coke bottles, even the bland cover of your No Frills baked beans.

Computer games are no exception. The earliest computer programs often had a design element and we've all played around with graphics programs on some system or other. But now, with high speed processors and high resolution monitors, design is back on the PC and this time it's written by adults for adults and is a really useful addition to your games collection.



*Right: The RECS system for designing your own track in Lotus*

*Far Right: Europress' game building Klik 'n' Play*



*Right: ChessMaster's New Perspective, where board design meets modern art*

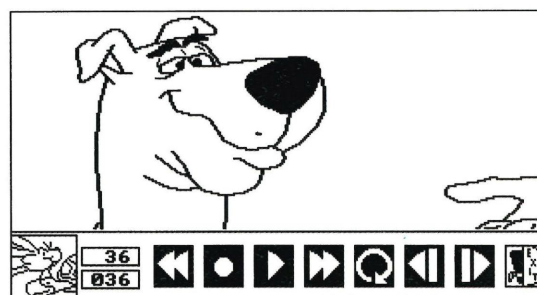
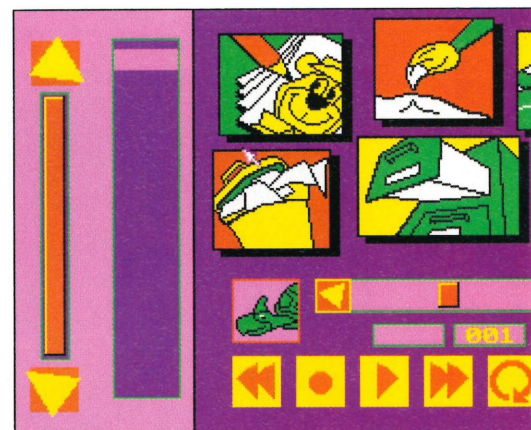
*Far Right: The technical wizardry of the Toolkit's Terrain Editor*

Take festive design aids, previously perfected in Activision's Christmas Kit. This Blue Peter style of DIY card presentation has now been brought up to date with the new generation of Far Side/Fred collections by the Software Toolwork's Card Shop Plus.

Humour is a relative thing, as anyone knows who's spent hours scanning card stands trying to pick just the right wise crack for the card's recipient, so the Card Shop is just the right place to go if you want to personalise your greeting. You can take one of 500 suggested messages for the front of your card and put your own inside, you can add your own text in one of 20 fonts, or just take their pictures and write the words yourself.

Card presentation has moved on since the old fashioned school of bright and breezy flowers and balloons and Card Shop mirrors this with over 1,000 pieces of up-to-date artwork, the sort you'd find in your local Card Rack. These highly original designs and some familiar old gags (the old ones are the best) can be mix 'n' matched to fit the cover, inside and even the back of your very own card.

What's revolutionary about this isn't so much the program's capabilities, nor the content, not even the colourful, clear presentation. It's more the fact that programmers are using the design capabilities of the

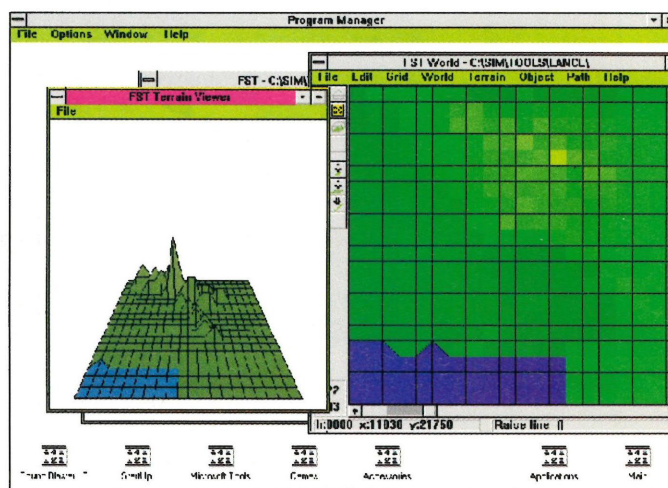


PC and publishing them on a mass market for people who can't program themselves or aren't plugged into Shareware services.

The most important thing about these programs is that they appeal to various ages and levels of user experience. With such a wide range of PC users, these products need to be accessible to techno wiz-kids and dunces alike. To this end, the Hanna-Barbera Animation Workshop is so flexible it's bendy.

It uses professional animation tools, like 'onion skinning', a method of frame fitting, but its icon tool bar with scissors and paint brushes is clear and obviously orientated towards the younger user.

One common feature of these design programs is the necessity for hundreds





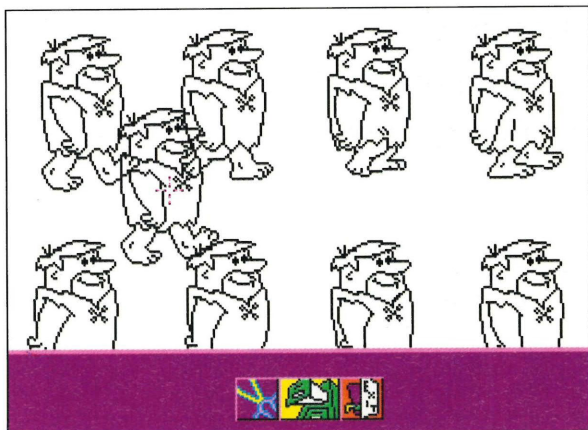


**Above Left:** The icon-based menu is simple and appealing to kids

**Above Right:** Barney's walk in eight stages

**Right:** In this Card Shop you can type your own message

**Far Right:** Design the front, inside and back of your card and then print it all out on the coloured paper provided



of pieces of artwork ready stored on disk. Browsing through the clip art of Hanna-Barbera, you realise the limitations of this catalogued approach pretty quickly. Of course Empire's game gives you the chance to draw your own sketches or to import pictures via a video camera and Rombo digitizer. The package is sure to appeal to kids, with its popular licences of the Flintstones, Scooby Doo and Yogi Bear but it is still a powerful tool and contains hints from top animators at Hannah Barbera studios and a historical section.

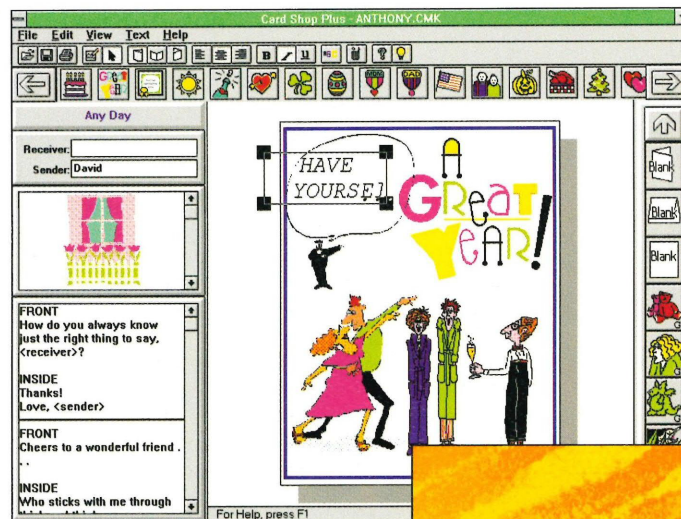
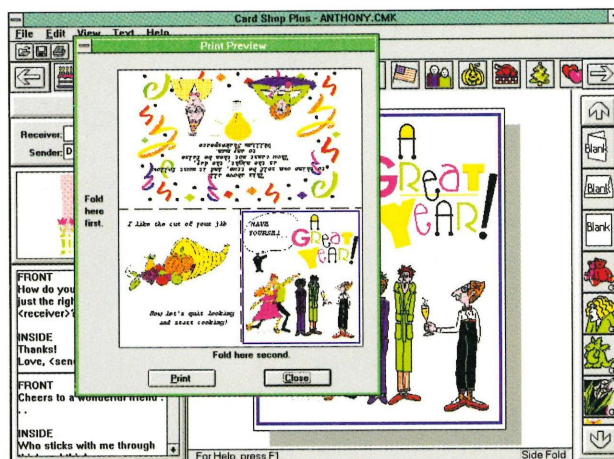
**Whilst this** exemplifies the practical side of PC design, Flight Sim Toolkit utilises design purely for entertainment purposes. And it's surprising how much fun you can have with this comprehensive but simple-to-use Windows game, the latest in a long line of simulator modifiers from Domark.

A virtual world full of 3D objects provides you with the building blocks, just like those popular God games. But unlike the various life simulators, the Toolkit has no pre-defined objective. This makes the set-up much more fluid and your imagination really is the only limitation. So as well as shaping the terrain and constructing buildings on it, putting planes in the sky and arming them ready for combat, the

player will be the one setting the mission objectives.

The idea is that you will build courses and design missions for friends to pit themselves against, a common and important part for gamers looking for something new from games they have completed.

The terminology and under-generous manual may be difficult to get to grips with, but the first real step in games design has been made. The next may well come from our very own Europress Software. Their Klik 'n' Play is only sketched in in vague terms for its Autumn release, but we are told that it will generate all sorts of games from platformers to racing

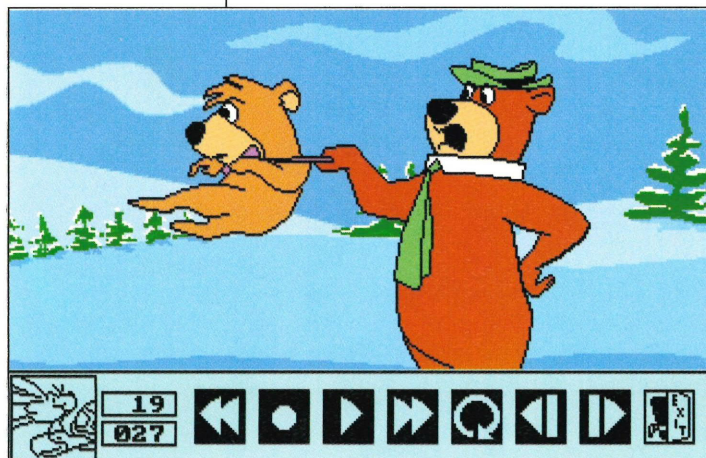


games and as such will be truly unique and aimed at all age groups.

PC games with their extensive options screens have always included a certain element of design flexibility. Gremlin's Lotus, with its Racing Environment Construction System is the ultimate in track design and racing fanatics go wild over its capabilities.

Setting up impossible tracks, with sharp curves and steep corners while the rain is pouring down, with the fog and the wind affecting your handling and various obstructions barring your way is indeed the ultimate challenge for those looking for more and more gaming thrills. This may prove an important part of VR games worlds of the future. It's even rumoured that Tie Fighter will contain a mission creator.

**In Chessmaster 4000** you can select boards and pieces from a range which would delight a craftsman. And so what if that's nothing new? In the post-modern '90s there's very little that's truly original. The fact is that the design element of games is more entertaining and more realistically high-tech than ever before.







# W N I L T D O

**i** ENJOY BEING MY OWN BOSS,' IS SOMETHING CRISPIN SINCLAIR, SON OF CLIVE, IS QUICK TO POINT OUT. BUT JUST HOW BOSS-LIKE CAN HE BE WITH THE SINCLAIR REPUTATION ALWAYS PRECEDING HIM? SHARON GREAVES TALKS TO JUNIOR



**NAME:** Crispin Sinclair

**PORTFOLIO:** Managing director of Sinclair Direct

**Z**X80. Sinclair C5. What does the name Sinclair mean to you? Whatever recollections Sir Clive and his (betimes) eccentric creations conjure up, his experimentations with electronics brought about the birth of the computer as a hobbyist pursuit. From crude pixelly blobs scurrying across the screen, the computer game has since developed into a mass growth market.

If you don't have some sort of games machine now, you're branded an outcast, a social nerd. Yes. Sinclair. The name embraces fond recollections for those embarking on the magical mystical games tour in the early '80s. They were the days.

But that was then. This is now. Let's bring the clock forward to the early '90s. Sir Clive is now pottering around in central London inventing a new type of electrically powered bike and other forms of transport along the same veins as the Zike. Meanwhile, one of his sons, Crispin, is ensconced in snug North London offices from where he directs his fledgling PC games mail order company, aptly called Sinclair Direct.

Of course it would be considered rude to steam right on in asking, 'so, how's your dad these days?' before introductions are even underway. So we will wait until we're settled in a little restaurant literally next door to where his dad resides and the bottle of wine is half empty before popping the inevitable 'so, how's your dad then?'.

Crispin doesn't take offence. He's 27 years old now and is glad to amiably retrace the steps back to his childhood. So what was it really like having a famous dad? Did it originate taunts – or jaunts – from his fellow contemporaries?

**'As far as I was concerned'** it didn't matter who my dad was when I was a kid,' is his answer. Although surrounded by digital watches and pocket calculators he had a normal upbringing, bar the Christmas presents that, year in year out, consisted of all the latest software and hardware novelties way before the rest of the population had even caught a glimpse of them.

His mother never got into computers at all. To her it was just work, but Crispin followed the trends began by his father and when the ZX80 appeared in 1980 followed by the ZX81 in 1981, he was there at the forefront, coaxing the games into some form of animated life.

At one point in his youth he even went so far as to design a slot machine game. 'You had a slot machine on the screen,' he explains 'and you typed in how much you wanted to bet. Then all three wheels would start spinning and you'd be told how much you would win. I was so chuffed with it. But my dad declined the offer of making it into a commercial game.'

Obviously Senior recognised the 'flop' potential of this early foray into

**'YOU GET REMEMBERED FOR YOUR FAILURES RATHER THAN YOUR SUCCESSES'**

the world of programming, should its design have been pursued. 'But if you think of ideas and then put them into practise you do end up failing some of the time,' Crispin reasons. 'The only way to guarantee non-failure is not to go into it in the first place. You get remembered for your failures rather than your successes.'

**Nowhere in British history** has this been more apparent than when looking upon the infamous Sinclair C5 – a battery powered motorbike-cum-Robin Reliant that has since gone down as a 'national joke' in Crispin's words: 'The only time I drove one I got chased down the road by a gang of punks. There I was, peddling like mad wondering what on earth to do but luckily some of my mates just happened to be around the corner and when the gang saw them they then decided that they weren't chasing me after all.'

'That was my one and only experience in the C5. In the early '80s when it was designed it was a time of yuppies with car phones and maybe you could partly put that down to its failure. Perhaps people would be more accepting of the idea now.'

Novelty will always equate to attention, whether this be good or bad press, especially in the crammed software industry. Accordingly Crispin is now concentrating all his efforts on introducing something different, something novel, in his four months old PC games mail order company, already an overcrowded market into which to venture.

While other many mail order companies are subsidising the Japanese electronics industry with Sega and Nintendo deals, Sinclair Direct is turning to THE games machine of the moment – the PC.

**'I thought there was a gap'** in the market now that PC games are starting to take off in a big way,' he says, 'but all the other mail order companies were selling PC games alongside Sega and Nintendo so it was a bit of mixed bag. The PC market has different demands though. On the whole it's adults who play the games, from 17 years old through to the 30s and 40s. You then get a different type of customer and so the idea is to have a slightly different style of company. OK, the prices are slightly higher compared to other mail order companies but at the same time the service is better and this will appeal more to adults who demand a decent service.'

'Really, there should be a big market in mail order games. The bulk of the market goes to HMV and Virgin. The average mark up from trade price to retail price is 100%. With mail order that becomes 30% which makes the game a lot cheaper.'

But apart from guaranteeing a next day delivery, the factor that Crispin is hoping to set this company apart is the further promise of a money back guarantee, surely something that will appeal to people unfamiliar to PCs or still unsure as to what type of game will tickle their fancy the most. Crispin is not slow to air his criticisms of magazine reviewers in general and how, generally speaking, they don't actually explain how hard and incredibly ►

**'MAGAZINES DO HAVE A TENDENCY OF ONLY APPEALING TO DIE-HARD GAMESPLAYERS, BUT AT £50 A THROW YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO BE TOO LENIENT'**





► complex some games are. 'Magazines do have a tendency of only appealing to die-hard gamers,' he says. Reviewing is what they do for a living. 'But at £50 a throw you can't afford to be too lenient.' For example, a lot of magazines rated Falcon 3 yet when the average person goes out and buys it they realise that maybe it's far too complicated for them and really couldn't be bothered with it. But they've wasted over £30 on a game. Do that several times and you're looking at a potential £100 down the pan. Of course you then become a bit cautious about buying another game.

Crispin's answer is to allow would-be buyers a greater freedom of choice. 'If you don't like a game, you can send it back. More people are then prepared to take a bit of a risk. We got the MicroSoft Flight Simulator scenery disk for San Francisco which gives a completely aerial plan of the whole city. We tried it on a 486DX 33mhz and it worked so slowly that it was completely hopeless. Someone ordered it and sent it back stating how useless it was so obviously we gave him his money back straightaway.'

**Surprisingly not many people** take advantage of this facility and the bulk of the returns include a letter explaining why they feel a particular game is unsuitable for their personal use. To compliment this service, if it's help you seek, then Sinclair is only too ready to respond.

Should you receive a game that refuses to load, then all you need do is call the help line and the voice at the other end will take you through the various criteria, whether that be how to load extended memory, alter config files or even give the computer a slap on the face when it gleefully retorts with error \*.\*. (Or something). They even go so far as to make boot disks to send to struggling gamers. All in all, 'offering a better quality of service'.

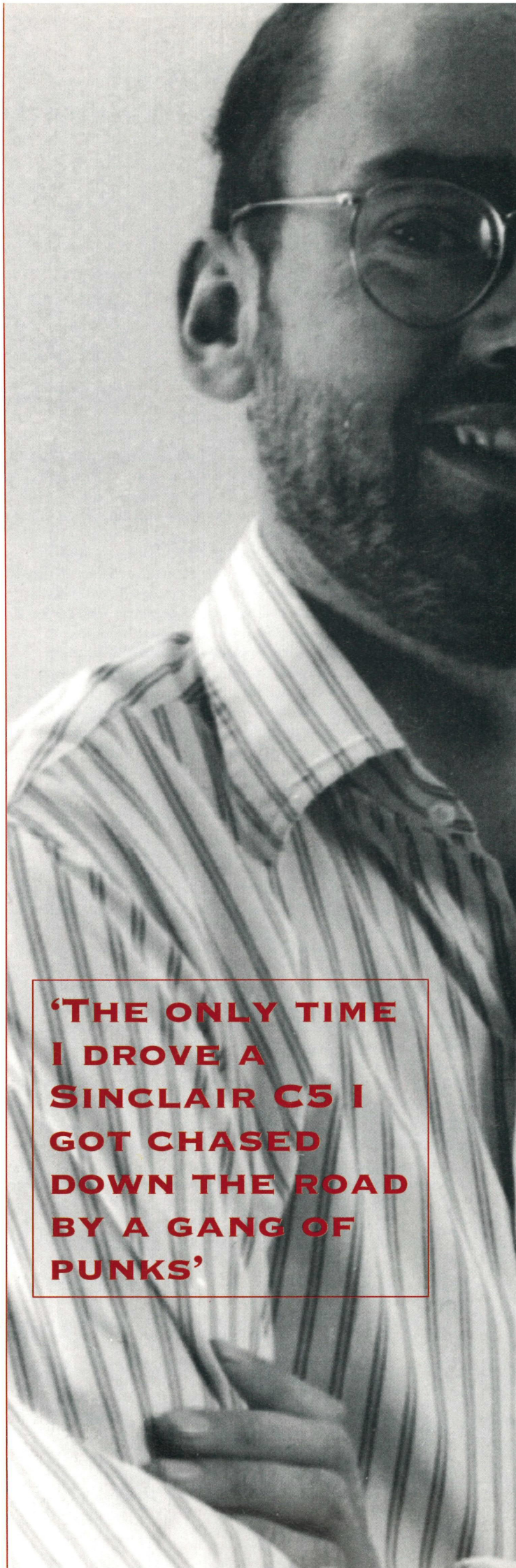
Crispin's background has involved working in Game computer retail stores in Manchester as well as being a hardware buyer previous to that. At heart he doesn't particularly enjoy having to work and live in the country's capital but circumstances (a nasty car accident in which he smashed up his ankle and has been unable to drive since) have called the shots.

He's found the mail order business relatively easy to get into despite the fact that it has cultivated somewhat of a negative image over the years. 'In magazines every month new companies spring up and the next month they've folded and someone else has started up. It tarnishes our reputations because people become wary of ordering in case the company goes bust a few days later and the cheque fails to materialise again.' This is where Sinclair Direct has an advantage. The name catches the eye and it's a name that people trust, signifying that it's not a fly by night company. 'That said, the name only counts for so much.' Crispin points out: 'If you don't do the job properly the name means nothing.'

Sir Clive acts as director in the company and liaises on a weekly basis with his son on how proceedings are going. It's still early days for this venture, early days too for the PC as a games machine. The main problem is that they're very complicated to use. 'Until MicroSoft or whoever designs a new system it will stay this way. That said, if a game's going to work properly it needs a few MB RAM, and a hard disk and a CD are also handy. When the dream machine comes along it isn't going to be cheap.'

**Crispin is one of the growing** breed looking towards the days of Virtual Reality and the times where you'll be able to organise your life around one central dataline coming in through the TV/computer monitor. Who knows whether this in fact will become concrete, but of one other reality he is sure. The son of the man who popularised the home computer will continue to move with the times and forge his own route. At University there was always the minority he looked upon him as a rich kid spoilt brat or a right wing fascist, but for the most part he was treated fairly. The lad who grew up with Space Invaders and has since turned to Doom, the man who spent his university years studying Business up in Scotland away from the bright lights where, with not a keyboard or electronic gadget in sight, he spent his days scribbling dissertations by hand, has come of age. ■■■■

**'THE ONLY TIME  
I DROVE A  
SINCLAIR C5 I  
GOT CHASED  
DOWN THE ROAD  
BY A GANG OF  
PUNKS'**





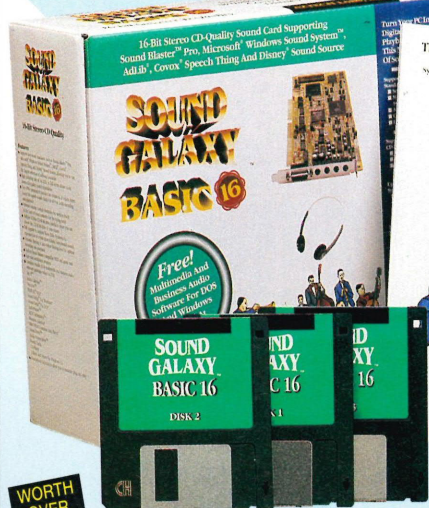
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**'FOR MAKING MUSIC,  
THE SOUNDBLASTER IS  
ABSOLUTE CRAP.'**

BEN DALGLISH, FREELANCE GAMES MUSICIAN



# ames music

**As games move into the CD generation, the 'Video games are the new musician finally has a decent medium for his rock 'n' roll! That's what I work. Jon Ewing charts the progress of call wave table synthesis' computer games music from the dark ages**

**W**hen Tommy Tallarico, director of music at Virgin USA, was asked to host a special edition of the top-rated American TV show *Friday Night Videos* to discuss interactive music, one special sequence was banned from transmission. To open the show, he stood in front of the cameras with an electric guitar raised above his head and screamed out 'This crap has got to stop', as he viciously brought the instrument swinging down to pummel a defenceless SNES console into oblivion.

Well, it would have made great TV, but would it have made a fair point? Every software developer around is working on ground-breaking CD-based software. Musically, our home PC systems are capable of stunning acrobatics, but have we really come far from the bad old days of the three-voice sound chip?

Getting a job is often down to who you know, not what you know, so (surprise, surprise) a quick investigation reveals that many of the top people in the computer games music field are veterans of the

Commodore 64. But way back in the early 1980s, writing music for computers was not exactly 'composing'. The task called for a programmer, not a musician, entering individual notes of a certain pitch, for a certain time, in one of three voices.

Still, there was scope for creativity even then: the patriarchal games musician Rob Hubbard (the muso behind the classic Mega Drive cart *John Madden Football*) was one of the pioneers with C64 games like *Mega Apocalypse*. Using sounds 'toggled' together in very quick succession he discovered that you could get a rippling noise, a little like the strum of a guitar. With another voice you could couple each bass note with a hi-hat sound, to get a 'boom-tshh, boom-boom-tshh' kind of rhythm. Musically pretty primitive, but totally impossible without a complete understanding of the way a computer worked.

'When we started, everything was written in peoples' bedrooms between nine o'clock at night and the early hours of the morning,' ►







# games music



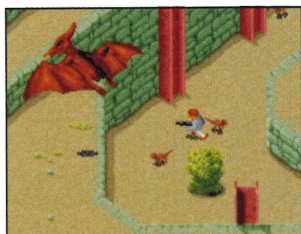
► says his colleague, freelance composer Ben Daglish (Legends Of Valour). 'Those were the days when only one person could write a whole game.'

Those times of spotty teenagers locked in their rooms are not entirely forgotten. At the offices of Ocean Software, for example, the programmers are shut away in 6' x 8' cells while they tinker away. Dean Evans, all of 22 years old, worked on Jurassic Park in strictly limiting conditions.

Tucked into his Ocean office filled with keyboards he is always bowing to the demands of programmers who probably have no respect for his input. And despite the growing scope of his work, his job is far from safe. 'It is a bit scary,' he says, 'cause a lot of companies are getting professional musicians in.'

Tim Bartlett, one of the in-

**Right:** Jurassic Park, a movie tie-in with a strong original soundtrack by Ocean's in-house man Dean Evans **Below:** Legends of Valour, with music by Ben Daglish



house composers at Codemasters, feels a similar detachment from the big picture. His most recent PC project has been to write new music for a CD-Rom compilation of arcade games. But now that he has written it, he has been totally cut off from the project.

'We're asked to do this music for CD-Rom,' he told me, 'but what happens to it after that is completely out of our hands.' Ben Daglish, a qualified musician and conductor of the Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra, spent more than two years working as a composer for Gremlin, but eventually could not stand it any more.

'In the last few months at Gremlin I was writing a suite of tunes every week. Being part of a corporate machine isn't fun. It's like being part of a factory. There is a great difference between being an artist and being a programmer.'

Newcomers like Dean Evans and Tim Bartlett have stumbled into the business in a variety of different ways. Dean is a self-taught musician with no recognised training who then

managed to impress the bosses at Ocean with a brilliant demo tape. Tim however applied for his job after a couple of years playing around with public domain music software on his Amiga at home.

On the other hand, youngster Jason Whitely (writer of the moody Space Hulk soundtrack for Electronic Arts) is a classically-tutored pianist who aspires to giving up playing music altogether so that he can work as a kind of 'creative director' with the help of a team of

musicians and composers.

'There was a time when people just didn't want to hear the music on games,' he says, recalling the not-too-distant past. 'But in most of my reviews I've had to make sure you turn the volume up, which is nice.'

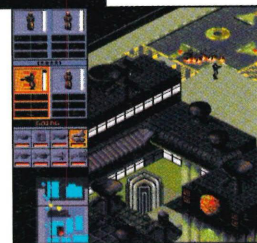
The idea of a new role for computer musicians is catching on in a big way. For the last couple of years the top megabucks software companies have all had 'Directors Of Music', a concept which would have instilled derisive laughter 10 years ago.

Again, not surprisingly, they are all old boys. Charles Deanen, who once worked on the C64 in the Netherlands under the name Maniacs Of Noise, is now head man at Interplay in the USA. He receives dozens of demo tapes from hopeful musicians every week. 'They're sucking up heavily,' he says.

With so many people keen to jump on the gravy train, the job of the musical director becomes a crucial one. If computer games are ever going to be accepted as a form of art, no fraction of the whole can be left to chance. The industry needs people with vision. Tommy Tallarico, second cousin to Steve Tyler (nee Tallarico) of Aerosmith, is a rock 'n' roll high priest from hell, straight outta' Wayne's World and into the offices of Virgin USA.

'I don't know the first thing about

**Below:** Id's superior new title Doom uses flawless music technology, but you will need the very best hardware to hear it **Top:** Seminal interactive shoot 'em-up Wing Commander, with music by George Sanger **Above Right:** Syndicate, from Bullfrog, carries on the good work and provides a highly realistic atmosphere



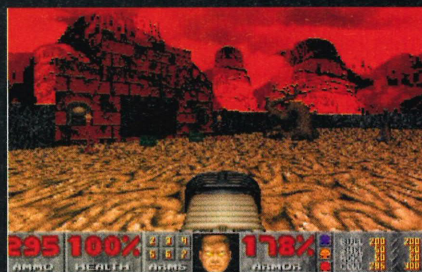
## card games

**a**lthough many gamers in Britain have only recently purchased their first soundcards, there are professionals in the USA already ringing the death knell. 'I feel sorry for all those people making soundcards right now,' says Charles Deanen of Interplay. 'Your soundcard costs \$199, and your CD-Rom is going to cost \$199 - which do you think people are going to go for?'

This opinion is certainly not shared by the industry as a whole. 'I definitely think that the soundcard is here for the foreseeable future,' says Robin Fitton of CD Systems in the UK. 'In about four years time they will be so good that it will be 10 times better to program for soundcards than for CDs.'

However, soundcards have one huge advantage over CDs: Musical Instrument Digital Interface (MIDI), an internationally agreed standard of electronic hardware (along with a language of commands) which allows a piece of music to be stored in the program data and replayed remotely through a compatible soundcard. The music itself is not stored, but only the instructions necessary to carry out the performance, so MIDI files are tiny in comparison to CD music files.

Again, there are complications with the system. Many soundcards now support the General MIDI (GM) system. All compatible hardware uses a pre-defined keymap of 47 drum sounds, 128 other (musical) sounds and set parameters for output levels, pitch bend and so on. However, apart from Roland's products, the GM soundcards on the market often tend to have glitches in compatibility. More importantly, they are still at the top end of a price range in which most people are struggling to catch up.



The state of the art soundcard for MIDI musicians is the Roland SCC1, aka the Sound Canvas, which uses Roland's own system G5 to replace GM. It produces superb music, but at \$425 it is not a game-player's card.

'The Sound Canvas can reproduce great 16-bit guitar sounds,' says Robin Fitton. 'Loads of pop records, by Madonna, Kylie and so on, they all use the same sounds. The only difference is that they use a live vocal.'

Dean Evans of Ocean agrees: 'It has 16-bit samples, which is the same as most keyboards these days, and 32 channels, which is better than most keyboards. There's no reason why you can't get a near-CD quality track on these boards, with the exception of memory, of course.'



programming,' he boasts. 'I want to revolutionise the way people hear and feel computer games. All the music that came before was little bleeps and blips and merry-go-round toons. Those Mario toons make you wanna puke! Crappy, with no feeling at all, because when you're typing on a computer keyboard or clicking with a mouse, you just can't write music.'

There is no doubt that genuinely creative people – artists, for want of a better word – exist in the computer music business right now. They are being busily original, but they are in the background. Nobody knows their names, and like the composers of film or TV soundtracks, their integrity as artists is undermined by the simple fact that they do it all for a commission.

Aren't they just in it for the money? 'I'm a game soundtrack purist,' says Richard Joseph (The Chaos Engine) in his defence. 'There's a lot of creative work involved.'

'I don't think of it necessarily as art, because to me it's a day-to-day life. But there are moments when I'm sitting there thinking 'F\*\*k, what I'm doing is actually art!' and there are other moments when I think 'This is a drag. This is a job.' So it's 50:50.'

In the past, computer games musicians were always at the very end of the chain of development. They would be handed a game in an almost completed state and told to get on with it. In the '90s, that attitude is changing and musicians are more frequently brought in from the very beginning to suggest their own ideas. But does it do any good?

Well, the simple answer is yes. If the music is planned from the start to coincide with the action it dramatically improves the level of interaction. The word 'interaction' is the subject for another, much-lengthier discussion, but it is a word which is now very often being

**'THE MARKET'S GETTING VERY CROWDED NOW BOTH ON AN AMATEUR AND A PROFESSIONAL LEVEL, AND OBVIOUSLY ONLY THE FITTEST ARE GOING TO SURVIVE.'**

JASON WHITELY

## **'ALL THESE COMPUTER GEEKS ARE NOT ABLE TO COMPETE WITH WHAT I'M DOING BECAUSE THEY DON'T HAVE REAL INSTRUMENTS.'**

TOMMY TALLARICO OF VIRGIN USA



linked with music. In truth, it has never really happened yet (games music is strictly speaking 'interruptible' because it has a finite number of possible arrangements), but the important development is the rapport between the music, the action and the player.

'The player has to be concerned about what is taking place,' says Tom Watson, managing director of Renegade. 'Otherwise you don't care about whether you win or lose. Take a look at the way the cinema works. Take a look at Jaws. Before the shark ever appears you have a couple of minutes of boom-boom, boom-boom, boom-boom, which builds up very gently, just working on the heart rate. It's just trying to stimulate you.'

One of the best early interactive scores is George A. Sanger's music for Wing Commander. From the hushed ambience of the home base, to the icy trepidation of the briefing room, out into the cold, barren vacuum of space, the music gradually builds into a thrilling soundtrack.

But where it really succeeds is during the dogfight sequences, where the tension builds up to a bloodvessel-bursting intensity. As your ship goes into close combat with a fleet of Kilrathi, the panic is as overwhelming as trying to out-stare Richard Whiteley as the last few seconds tick away on the countdown clock.

George Sanger has since gone on to work on the much-vaunted 7th Guest project, producing a very successful CD soundtrack which was even given the luxury of liner notes and a tracklisting in the manual. This is a massive leap in recognition for the games musician, and a well-deserved one. As games move into the CD generation, the musician finally has a decent medium for his work.

Since Wing Commander, there have been plenty of successful attempts to reproduce the same effect – Wing Commander 2, for one. More recently, Bullfrog's arcade/strategy game

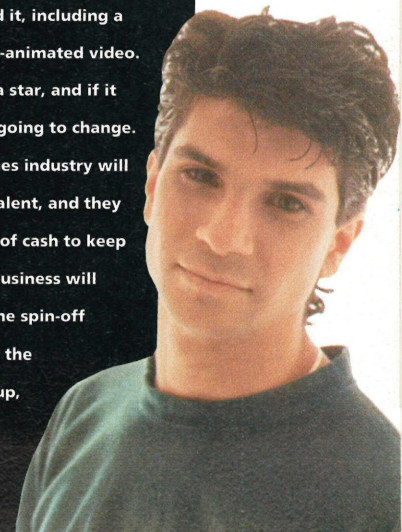
Syndicate combined a remarkable atmospheric soundtrack with terrifying chunks of shoot-out music. Richard Joseph's music for Chaos Engine is also particularly impressive.

This plan-view, free flowing action game has different pieces of music connected to different locations. If you are in a place on the map where there are puzzles to solve, the music is calm and trebly. When you draw near to the beasts, the bass gradually picks up over a couple of bars and the rhythm changes. Moreover, if you fight off all the baddies and return to that section later, the soundtrack remains gentle because there is no longer a threat. The music recognises the fact that gameplay does not have to be linear – it is a little bit different every time.

'Lately we've been treating games like movies here,' says Charles Deanen, the musician behind Interplay's Star Trek games. 'So the soundtrack has to sound big, it has to sound real. If it doesn't – well, it will have to ▶

### **games greatest hits**

the one man who really wants to shake up the whole scene, Tommy Tallarico, is doing his best to change things. His new album, 'Virgin Games Greatest Hits Volume 1', is out now on Capitol Records worldwide. It is a studio recording of songs from his Sega CD games, mixed and mastered at the famous A&M studios in Los Angeles (the venue for the recording and video of 'We Are The World') featuring 13 songs from the soundtracks of Global Gladiators, Terminator CD and others. It promises to be a total rock-fest, and it should have the full weight of the EMI publicity machine behind it, including a blinding Silicon Graphics-animated video. Maybe it will make him a star, and if it does, a lot of things are going to change. Music makers in the games industry will be recognised for their talent, and they will get paid truck loads of cash to keep them happy. The music business will start releasing video game spin-off albums like the safety of the world depended on it. Yup, we've got all of that fun to come.

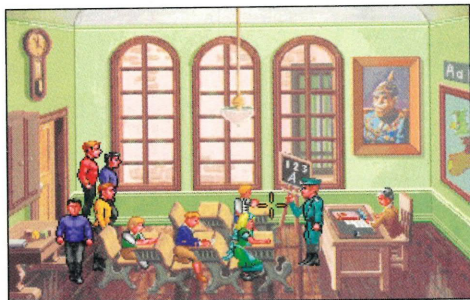


**Top:** Wing Commander **Top Right:** Charles Deanen, the ambitious Director of Music at Interplay in America **Right:** Maverick rock musician Tommy Tallarico whose new album 'Virgin Games Greatest Hits' has just been released



Now that's what I call

# games music



► be done again.'

Interplay's latest project, Vikings, will include up to 40 pieces of individual music – some of them just 'bridges' between two other scenarios. Of those 40, 13 or 14 will be complete songs (possibly employing a 50-piece orchestra recorded live in a concert hall). Then of those 13 or 14, five will be extra tracks on the CD, featuring music with full vocals. The budget for music alone will work out to be more than \$20,000.

Interplay are not alone. Tommy Tallarico of Virgin USA is on a similar crusade. 'My goal,' he proclaims with dignity, 'is for the player to want to listen to the music even after he shuts the game off. That's a very difficult thing to do, because if you take your favourite song of all time and then play it 500 times in a row, you get sick of it. So, in a four minute song, I might repeat the chorus twice.'

'I don't write it like a traditional song - verse, chorus, verse, chorus, solo, bridge, verse, chorus, fade - it's like intro, verse one, chorus one, bridge, solo, then I drag it out and never quite go back to the same thing. I'm always thinking, is this song good enough to be played on radio or really seen on MTV? That's my standard.'

Most composers seem to seek more inspiration from movie soundtracks than from the charts. Dean Evans based his first ideas for Jurassic Park on the opening rumble of timpanis on John William's original soundtrack. Jason Whitely listened to

the score of Bladerunner by Vangelis for guidance with the alien strategy game, Space Hulk. But Alien Sex Fiend, brought in by Ocean to write for their space epic Inferno, had different ideas, blending cinematic sounds with their usual rock weirdness.

'Some of it's like an ambient Alfred Hitchcock soundtrack, making your spine tingle. The alien feel is all spooky-dooky, but not quite as Gothic as one would imagine from us. The human side is semi-militaristic, and at the same time touching sort-of Velvet Underground. It is quite oddball.'

Creativity is always constrained by time, money and technological limitations. For the Sega CD game Powermonger, Jason Whitely had big plans for his music and scored the soundtrack on paper for an entire orchestra. In fact, he only managed to get four violinists.

Dean Evans was very proud of some of the Jurassic Park music: 'The action sequences work best. You drop into a trench and suddenly in the distance you hear the footsteps of a dinosaur. And then the music starts up... 'but he found that his best work had to be replaced due to hardware limitations. 'It's bad when the work that you've done has to be torn apart,' he says, with feeling.

The games industry has now become the 'multimedia and games' industry, which naturally implies an interest in sound and music as well as video, art, literature and blah, blah, blah. But that is all talk. What it means is that the games industry wants a piece of the movie industry and the music industry.

However, the movie industry and the music industry have been having an incestuous, backstairs romance for decades now, and they do not want anyone to come between them.

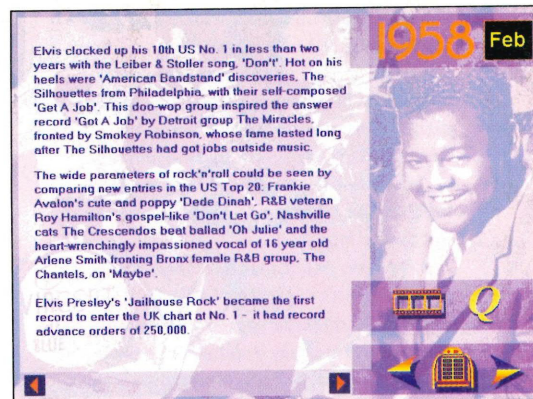
There are a few good multi-media packages in the shops. You can walk around Elvis

Presley's house in Virtual Graceland, or visit Peter Gabriel's Secret World on your Apple Mac. CDi has thrown up some interesting software, although mostly under-produced, and the PC is not far behind. For example, Supervision's Rock'n'Roll

Decades collects loads of music, statistics, biography, trivia and video footage on one CD for £24.99.

This is a multimedia album, of a sort, and there will be hundreds of multimedia solo albums to follow it – sooner or later, everyone from Suede to Roger Whitaker will jump on the bandwagon. But, to be brief, it is nothing to do with playing games.

Music publishing is an area of the music industry which is little-known to the general public. But it is causing a lot of consternation for the multimedia industry right now. Music publishers buy music from a songwriter and try



**Left:** Star Trek from Interplay **Above:** The future of the music history? Supervision's first multimedia compilation of '50s hits **Below Left:** Space Quest from EA, with Jason Whitely's music inspired by Vangelis **Bottom Left:** Legendary keyboard virtuoso Rick Wakeman **Bottom Right:** Gothic duo Alien Sex Fiend with Barry Leach of Ocean, composers of the 'spooky-dooky' soundtrack to Inferno

to get other artists to record or perform it, thereby accruing a royalty.

The publisher traditionally used to own the music for the lifetime of the author, although it is now more commonly 25 years or less. All royalties are divided between the author and the publisher and depending on the status of the songwriter, he or she might keep between 50% and 75% of the cash, before tax. This arrangement is completely separate from a recording contract, for which the performer is paid by the record company.

This age-old system, however, could very well be undermined by the multimedia business. In the games industry, musicians are paid a flat fee or a salary, and get absolutely no royalty from the sales of games. But since the late 1980s, as the talent of computer musicians has begun to flourish the music publishers have been finding that these people are good at what they do, and that is why they are getting worried.

What if the multimedia industry started up its own music business? The publishers would have a tough contest on their hands. The challenge for the publishers right now is to convince the games people that they need to work together. They want to strike up new agreements to put the music of established artists on to the soundtracks of computer games – a cross-marketing tactic which, supposedly, will benefit both sides. Yet the stumbling block is the money involved. There are no clearly defined procedures for negotiation between the music industry and the games industry, and frankly nobody is prepared to give an inch.

At the moment, the only suitable contract between the music publishers and the software houses is a system borrowed from the movie industry. In a film, if a piece of music is used,



Listen Carefully





## compact tricks

**t**he advantages of compact disc-quality audio are undeniable. Music and sound which plays direct from the disc has an infinite range of sound combinations, but to store the sound digitally requires a great deal of space on the CD. It takes more than 10Mb to store one minute of 16-bit stereo sound and even 8-bit stereo uses up 1.3Mb per minute with today's compression techniques.

During the development of most games for diskette, musicians have not been offered sufficient resources to justify that kind of sound quality.

Even now, with the advance to CD-Rom, much of the disc has been snatched by the graphics team before the musicians get a look at it. So what are they supposed to do?

For now, musicians just have to write music for the high-spec soundcards as if they were writing 'real music' and then whittle it down for all the others. This can be tedious, says Richard Joseph: 'The closest thing to an industry standard at the moment is the Soundblaster, and that was the card that turned me off the PC altogether.'

Even CDs are not good enough. Most games music composers complain that CDs break the flow of music because disc accessing time is too slow – it needs to be quadruple or octuple speed to flip from one piece of music to another without showing the join. At the moment, between each track on a compact disc there has to be at least a one second pause, and one second of silence can spoil the whole mood.

What compounds the problem is that you cannot access the disc for music when it is already being used to read graphics data. However, there is a way around the problem, according to Virgin mainman Tommy Tallarico: 'What people are doing is using the machine to create music

while the CD is being accessed for graphics.

'That's stupid. Why not do it the right way? Go into a studio, do it just the way Michael Jackson would record his next album, then just sample it and store it on the disc. You have to fool around with it a bit because it takes up too much space to store 44.1 KHz 16-bit digital audio, but if you cut it down to 22.1 then only dogs can hear the difference. So, if you want to show movie clips, you can then just trigger a sample from the sound chip.'

the film studio pays a 'synchronisation fee', a one-off payment to the publisher. If they use the original recording, they will also pay a 'master use' fee.

In the UK and Europe they will also be liable for a royalty each time the film is shown, a 'performance fee' but in the USA there is no system for collecting

performance fees so the synch fees tend to be very high. So far, this kind of money just does not fit into a game budget.

In the UK, some of the more marginal and experimental musicians have tried their luck in the games field. Rick Wakeman, the virtuoso '70s keyboard player, likes to dabble with new technology at the ripe old age of 45. He has recently been involved with the advanced

## 'I WANT TO WORK WITH EQUIPMENT THAT CAN MAKE EVERY SOUND THAT EVER EXISTED AND EVERY SOUND THAT EVER WILL - AND EVEN THEN I WON'T BE HAPPY.'

BEN DALGLISH, FREELANCE GAMES MUSICIAN

*Left: George Sanger returns with the elegantly executed 7th Guest Right: Jon Hare and the so-called Sensible Software team Bottom Right: Cannon Fodder – no record deal seems to be in sight for its musician Jon Hare*

Psygnosis shoot-em-up Microcosm, for which he scored just under 20 minutes of new, CD-quality music. He found the new 'interactive music' industry very welcoming. 'The games industry is far more overall streetwise,' he says. 'The music industry has a basic streetwise awareness of young kids and none whatsoever of anyone over the age of 20. The new breed of computer game is an area I would like to be involved with again, and perhaps on a long term basis. It is one of the few avenues left to musicians such as myself where you can still progress musically. Strangely enough I feel that this area is absolutely tailor made for me.'

Alien Sex Fiend, another unlikely throwback to musical years gone by, have been closely involved with the development of Inferno for Ocean. Nick and Mrs (Christine)

Fiend are unashamed goths whose trademarks are ghoulish, thick, white stage makeup and b-movie songs like 'Now I'm Being Zombified'.

Knowing very little about games, they were invited by Ocean to look at a new game, and found the whole thing to be an inspiration. 'There's got to be an open door between the computer business and the music business, because computer games outsell records four to one. A lot of underground trance and techno stuff with its pulsing, looping effects, it's quite vibrant music anyway. It's touching the same influences already.'

For Alien Sex Fiend, the game has been a total success, a well-needed shot in the arm. 'We can't be anything but smug about it,' says Nick of his five weeks at Ocean in Manchester. 'We've had such a good time. We've had more publicity from this than we've had in years!' As



a result, a 12" EP of Inferno re-mixes is to be released on WAU Records (071 820 9607), and there is some interest from top people in tackling a whole album of remixes. Meanwhile, putting games in the charts is something the musicians from the games industry are very keen to follow their success. But Miller Williams of Sony Publishing has his doubts. 'Most of the people who write instrumental music work in movies, TV or advertising,' he warns. 'Music publishers are

mostly concerned with songs, and whether these instrumental musicians are capable of moving into that area remains to be seen.'

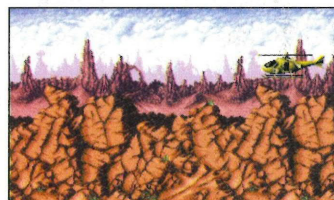
John Hare, the successful Sensible Software musician behind the music for Cannon Fodder, has tried to get a foothold in the music biz, so far to no avail. As confident as he is in his talent, and the quality of 'War Song', nobody wants to touch him. 'I'm losing heart with it because we haven't got the time to piss around chasing rainbows,' he confesses.

'Ideally we'd like to be treated like an established band, which is the way we're treated in the games industry. People will sign up a game from us from a piece of paper or an idea down the 'phone, because they know we can produce quality stuff.' At the same time, publishers and record companies expect total commitment from their signings, and they do not have patience with part-time acts.

'In recent years there have been a lot of instrumental hit records,' says Miller Williams, 'from my point of view you want to hear songs that will stand the test of time.'

JON EWING

■■■■■■■■■■





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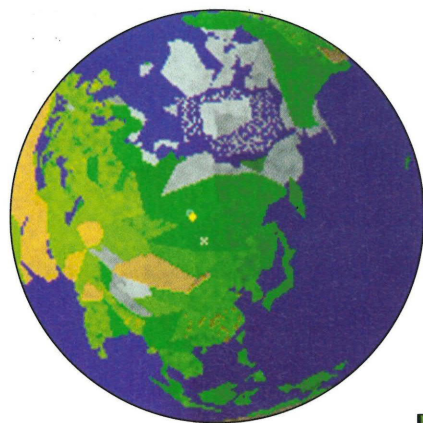
**t**he benchtest section of PC Action gives indepth and discernible reviews of all the latest PC games. All genres are covered and a myriad of opinions brought to the surface. Games given over 75% approach the recommended range. Those over 85% are best buys and 90% and above unmissable

## Recommended this month



### EVASIVE ACTION p44

**'It's much more satisfying to pickle a human opponent than a programmed machine'**

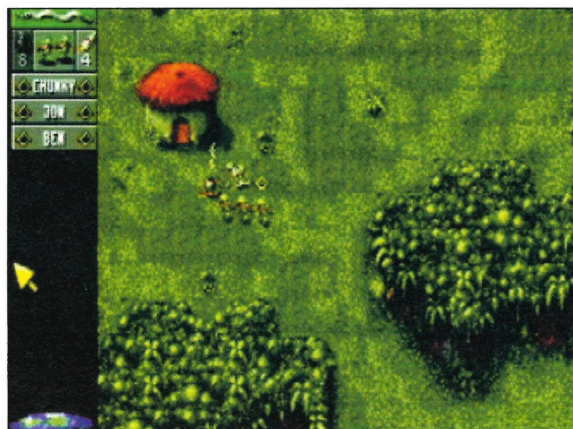


### UFO - ENEMY UNKNOWN p56

**'So addictive and rewarding that it all blends into a seamless gaming experience'**

### CANNON FODDER p39

**'Hours of fun. It's just so easy to play and rewarding'**



### COMANCHE DATA p38

The Over The Edge mission disk makes a near perfect game perfect

### CANNON FODDER p39

Enough sadism to live up the 'war has never been so much fun' sub title

### NFL PRO FOOTBALL p42

Challenging and very constraining, the Yanks invade sports game territory

### EVASIVE ACTION p44

No complicated take-offs. No mish-mash of controls. Simplicity is the name of the game

### AIRLINES p48

The only airline company simulator game. Can it therefore be labelled as the best?

### ALLO ALLO p49

The platform genre disgraces itself with groan worthy thigh slapping antics

### STARLORD p48

Populating the heavens and trading with the starlords put on a pretty face

### SABRE TEAM p50

Play your favourite fantasy and become a storm trooper in the SAS

### GOLDEN EDITION p53

Four wonderful games in one little package. Size means nothing

### RIGHTEOUS FIRE p55

Another mission disk for the perennial Privateer saga. When do the repeats start?

### UFO p56

A futuristic fantasy that yells of intrigue, research and complex involvement

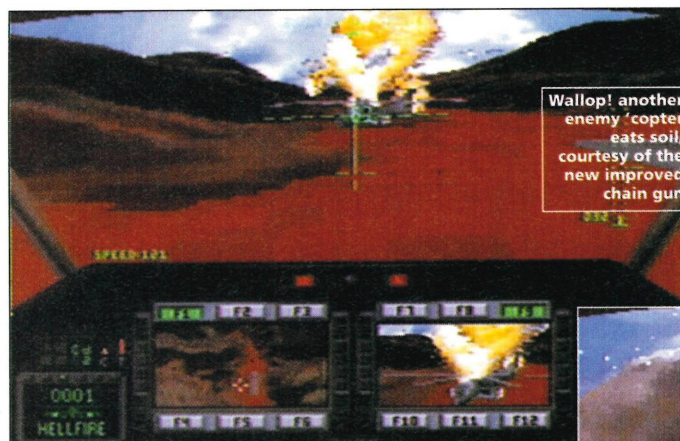


# COMANCHE: OVER THE EDGE

**PUBLISHER** US Gold  
**CONTACT** 021 625 3366  
**TEAM** Nova Logic  
**PRICE** £24.99  
**RELEASE DATE** Out Now

*'The ability to get to the verge without getting into the war is the necessary art'*

JOHN FOSTER DULLES 1888-1959  
 AMERICAN REPUBLICAN POLITICIAN

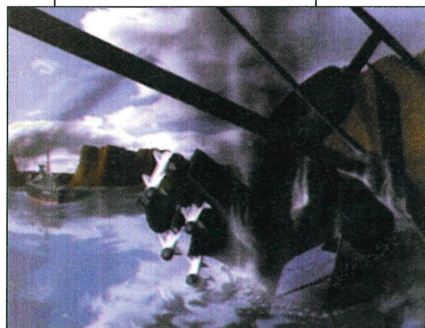


*To fly through voxel space was originally a treat. Now it's been enhanced. With reflections in the water and danger in the air. Climb inside and see*

**M**aximum Overkill was the game to own two years ago. No one had seen 3D graphical technology quite like it. Nova Logic had designed and programmed a completely new perspective on the over used flight sim engines that were becoming more and more predictable.

Gone were the plain polygon based buildings and landscapes, all the scenery

I'm going to be in a lot of trouble, let's just say it's not like crashing a Robin Reliant



and vehicles looked splendid and were made up of a multitude of polygons much smaller and detailed than before.

Since the original Comanche was taken up in the air, many missions have been flown by wannabe pilots. One mission disk has already been taken on board and completed.

*The recent X-Wing* add ons are an exception to the rule giving us new ships to fly and a good variety of new missions, taking advantage of their advantages over the other rebel craft.

Comanche's first mission disk improved on the original, being more of a test for pilots with more enemy vehicles to lock onto and wipe out.

But Over the Edge makes a near perfect game perfect. Not only are there 40 new missions to tackle but a program update to turn the already impressive landscapes and vehicles into a photo realistic flight of fantasy.

The 40 new missions take the form of four different scenarios.

They take place over several landscapes and climates which can either hinder or aid your aerial melées with the enemy air and ground forces.

The weather becomes a factor too. In the snowscapes a blizzard rages on outside and the bitter biting wind throws your 'copter around as you struggle to maintain lock on an enemy OH-A 'copter. In the desert a shimmering haze and intense climate must be withstood as the Comanche bucks and dives in the updraft of heat.

This may sound a little over the top, but the changing climates do noticeably effect the performance of your Comanche. Hiding behind hills and flying through valleys does not prove to be as easy as it was in Maximum Overkill.

The new adversaries are a mean bunch of unforgiving, gun toting morons with an annoying habit of just ducking behind a convenient mountain and breaking your missile lock just as your itchy finger goes for the trigger.

Enemy pilots intelligence has

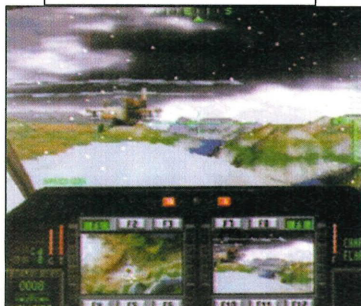
improved; they don't seem to get as close as they do in Overkill, or fly head on aimlessly firing rockets. Much more thought goes into taking them out and things get incredibly frustrating when there's a lot of them buzzing about you like bees. You have to constantly monitor your radar to see where they go, Above? Behind? Below?

All the improvements polish Comanche's game engine and just as the original was beginning to age it's put itself back on top. The Comanche itself looks better and more detailed on the outside views and the chain gun at the front now sounds like it's tearing up the ground, not like an old and rusty electronic toothbrush.

The improved graphics of all the game's main gameplay make this an essential upgrade for all Comanche pilots, new or old.

## 'Impressive landscapes and a photo realistic flight of fantasy'

Fast and bulbous, the new enemy choppers are much quicker than before. Watch It!



### appraisal

**N**othing has touched Comanche as far as arcade flight sims go. Despite being two years old Voxel space has lived up to Nova Logic's claims of revolutionary real time terrain rendering. Over the Edge proves a much bigger challenge than its predecessors, faster action and the detail of the landscape and enemies is breathtaking. The tweaking of all the game's finer points make it a real show off piece of software. This game shows us what the PC is good at: texture mapping,

light sourced objects, even the hills and mountains cast a shadow in the valleys making hiding easier for a while at least. The 'copter handles better and enemies are much more of a challenge. The element of surprise comes into it more with the rare opportunity of being able to take out enemy gun boats while they're still in dock. This is a real blaster of a sim. Action heads don't be too put off by the sim tag, clench your fists and lock on to Over the Edge.

PETE HAWLEY

PCA SCORE **85%**

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# CANNON FODDER

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PRICE	£35.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now

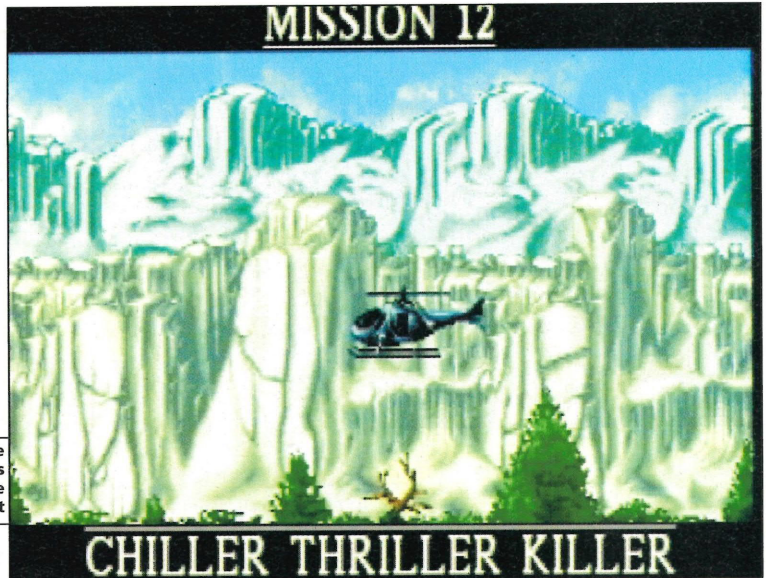
*'War's a brain-spattering, windpipe-splitting art'*

LORD BYRON 1788-1824



Stick together lads, you never know who's going to be in those innocent looking huts

This is the reliable chopper that drops your grunts in the thick of it



*Generals gathered in their masses, just like witches at black masses. In the fields the bodies burning... War...*

For centuries man has, rightly or wrongly, decided that the best way to resolve any argument is to have a war. But the horror of the real thing can't be dwelled on for too long, it's just far too depressing and a games mag isn't really the place to prattle on about it.

When we were younger war games were part of growing up, wandering around the playground arm in arm screaming at the top of your voice 'anybody want to play war, no girls allowed' and then spending your entire dinner hour rolling in the mud and throwing imaginary grenades, arguing until the final bell about whether you died or not. Or maybe that was just me.

Well now Sensible Software give you the chance to relive your childhood in the comfort of your own home and without getting covered in mud. So war isn't supposed to be fun, but this most certainly is.

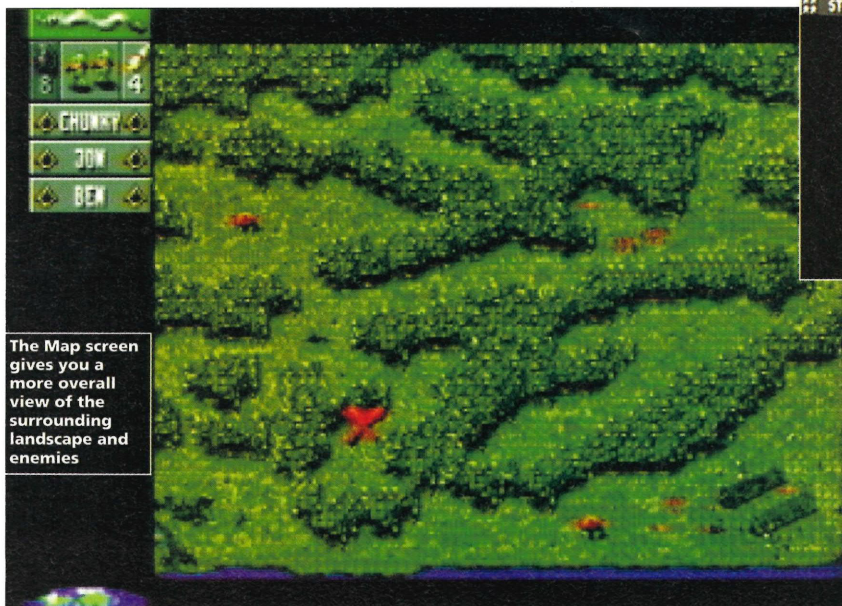
*Everyone must be* familiar with this style of game by now with an overhead view of the action and you playing game dictator by pointing and clicking with the mouse at people and places on the map. In Fodder you control a patrol of squaddies and sappers who must complete the mission goals. The aim of each mission is given before you enter the combat zone.

To begin with they normally revolve around the theme of killing all the enemy and their respective hideouts and buildings and



Let 'em have it boys. Enemy grunts suffer at the hands of your troops', screams, blood and spleens

**'Hours of frustrating gaming and a lot of laughs along the way'**



The Map screen gives you a more overall view of the surrounding landscape and enemies



Terribly hectic and nerve wrecking action ensues on the bridge. An ATV, a tank, lots of bullets and laughter

Things soon heat up as enemy forces introduce heavy weapons like helicopters and rocket launchers





# CANNON FODDER



Oh dear! Two men left and lots of enemy soldiers. Blow a hole in the wall and go for it



► later involve the rescue of hostages. But the variety of different ways this can be done makes Cannon Fodder the

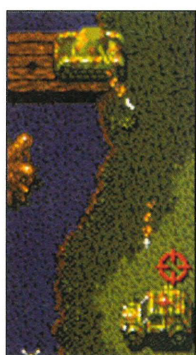
best blow 'em-up since Syndicate.

Your recruits come marching over the hill to queue up at the gates of your barracks and filter in after each successful mission is completed. Your score is accrued in much the same way as a football match believe it or not, home and away scores relating to your losses and your foes.

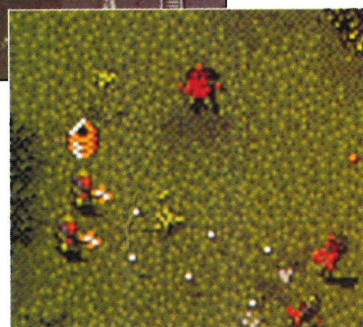
**It's important to** remember that it is just a game and tremendous fun to play because it's only too easy to fall into the media trap of condemning everything vaguely controversial, and in some places Cannon Fodder is.

The name of the game is a description

of infantrymen regarded as expendable in battle, sent out in almost unwinable situations to be mowed down by



Explosions going off all around, rockets and grenades and your men wading across the river



artillery fire. Then if you combine this with the fact that the poppy is used as the opening screen and the names of some of the later missions, 'super, smashing, namtastic' and 'village people' being the more cynical examples, and you've got enough controversy to upset a number of politically sensitive people.

**Your troops are** dropped by 'copter into the mission's setting and your men are then left alone to get on with the job at hand, which is basically wasting everything in sight.

Starting in the jungle the first mission is an exercise in how to move your men and fire your gun to kill just three enemy soldiers. Movement about the screen is a simple matter of just clicking on the desired destination with the left button and firing the selected weapon with the right button. The mouse movements around the screen automatically scroll the map around giving you a good all round perspective of the surrounding

The idea here is to take out all the men and then destroy their house. All in good fun of course



Your men slip and slide around on the ice which does nothing to help your survival chances

## déjà-vu

**I**f you don't know about **Syndicate** then you must have been living under a stone for the last year. It's set in a dark future where the major corporations dominate and govern the world. Your job as corporate boss is to direct covert operations into various areas of the world in order to undermine the influence of your competitors and eventually control the destinies of the world's populace (or populous). This is more bird's eye view gaming with Bullfrog's classic from last year. It looks and plays better than Cannon Fodder but is set in a different time scale and is more about espionage and secrecy than war itself. It's far more violent and the victims of your weaponry lie in pools of blood rather than just disappearing into the ground. The weaponry is not as readily available but offers tremendous devastation potential, both against enemy agents and their vehicles. **Syndicate** undoubtedly remains the king of this particular genre.



Pepper the enemy like Swiss cheese, if they fall to the ground maimed then you'll have to finish them off

area and approaching enemy forces.

When you fire, a red target circle appears and then it's just a simple matter of spraying the chosen enemy with bullets or tapping both buttons to hurl a grenade or fire a missile.

Initially each man is armed with a machine gun which is fine for the first few missions, but boxes of grenades and missiles are conveniently placed around the map for the more indepth excursions where you have to not only destroy the enemy but all their buildings too.

You've got to be careful though, usually the ammunition boxes are placed next to buildings where the enemy appear from, so going to retrieve them can prove rather difficult.

If the boxes are hit and you're just about to pick them up, they explode and take your men with them. Not

only are explosives at your disposal but a variety of vehicles are too. Just place your pointer over the tank or snow caterpillar and click the left button. Your man then enters and you take control of its movement and superior fire power.

As you motor about the map not only can you shoot your victims but mow them down as well. If things start to look grim then clicking on the map brings your men out to fight in the open air again which is much more rewarding and more of a challenge.

**The graphics are** a little blocky, which is even more apparent than normal because the characters are so small. If more attention had gone into the detail then Cannon Fodder would have been near perfect because the gameplay's here, the sound is great and it's tremendously enjoyable.

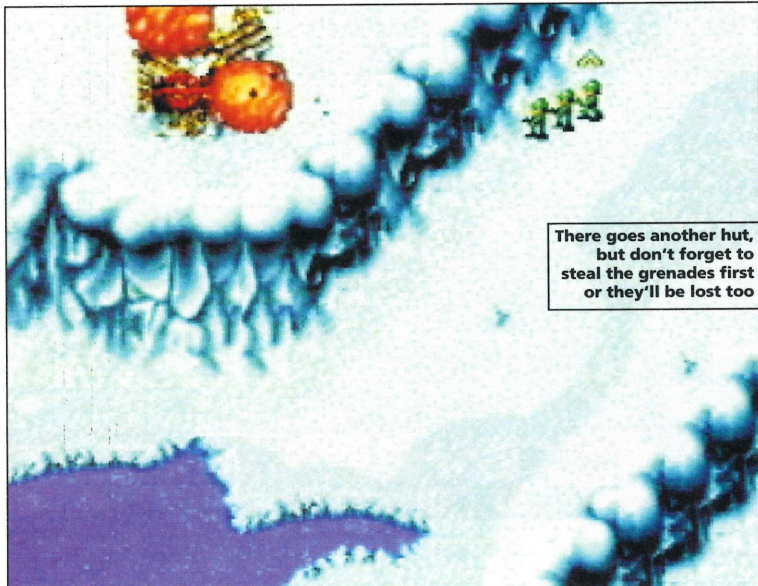
If a soldier is unlucky enough to live through an explosion or a heavy rain of gunfire, then he lies on the floor screaming in agony, writhing about and



Probably the most frustrating part of the game is those blasted helicopters floating about the place







squirting fountains of blood. But thankfully he can be very quickly put out of his misery with just a couple of humane shots.

**The success of** your sorties can be hindered by not just enemy soldiers but also by booby traps and natural hazards as well. Land mines lie almost unnoticed on the ground and the slightest miss-click of the mouse can lead you straight into a pool of quick sand where your man sinks slowly down saluting at the same time.

Some of the later missions have proved more than a match for someone of my calibre with rockets, tanks and helicopters all emptying their barrels in your general direction. But perseverance almost always pays off. If you want good value for money and you've got quite a lot of time to kill, go out and buy this game today.

## data bank

CONVENTIONAL MEMORY  
600K

MINIMUM MEMORY  
2MB

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS  
386 25MHz

OPTIMUM  
386 25MHz

HARD DISK SPACE  
T.B.A.

GRAPHICS  
VGA, SVGA (Recommended)

SOUND CARDS

SoundBlaster (Pro), Adlib, Adlib Gold, Roland

CONTROLS  
Mouse

Cannon Fodder offers hours of frustrating gaming and a lot of laughs along the way.

PETE HAWLEY

## second opinion

**T**his is certainly not a game that will make you any friends with the politically correct lobby - tasteless is probably an understatement. Personally, this did not really bother me and definitely did not detract from what is a little gem of a game. With a multitude of challenging missions on offer, Cannon Fodder possesses a highly charged atmosphere which also adds to the whole game. You can really get into sneaking round corners, leaping out and letting rip with sub-machine guns. Control of your men with the mouse is almost intuitive, and if you can stand the odd very dodgy joke Cannon Fodder will keep you playing for some time to come.

DARREN ALLAN

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88%

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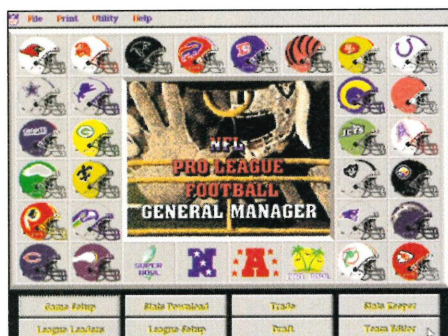
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GEORGE ORWELL 1903-1950

**The General Manager screen, where you concoct leagues and matches**



**M**any American Football sims have been released on various computer formats since the game was first popularised by Channel Four. The PC has seen the more serious incarnations – Front Page Sports and Coaches Club Football, not to mention Unnecessary Roughness.

No such option however is available in NFL Football, as it focuses purely on

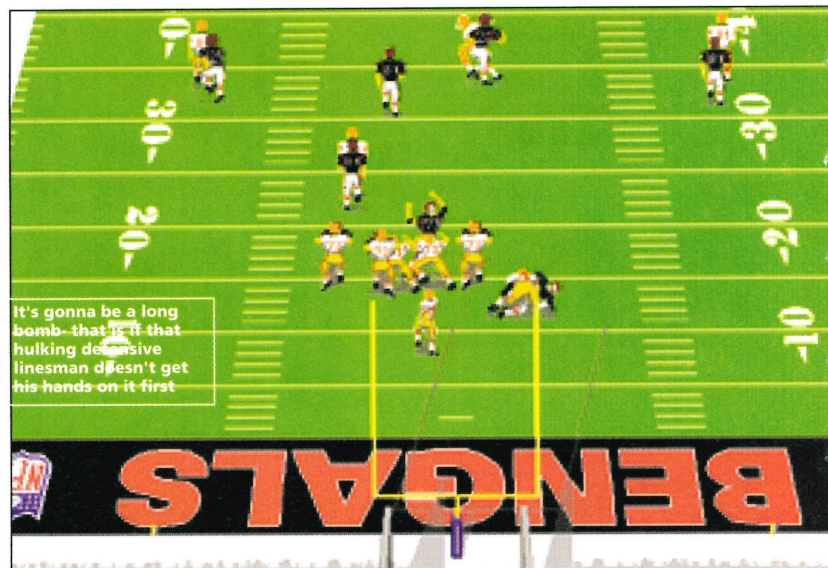
the strategic side of the sport. Whether this is a good thing or not depends entirely upon your point of view. If dodging the quarterback away from marauding linebackers appeals to you, then you will probably find the lack of any 'action' mode in NFL offputting.

A plethora of options are available to the budding Tom Landry. One off games can be played, as well as full seasons with leagues consisting of any number of teams. All the official NFL clubs can be

selected, with a complete set of rosters for the various squads from 1988-1993.

Not only this, but teams can be drafted from scratch, which is an idea never before incorporated into any

**Statistical detail is one of NFL's strong points. Huge lists of record holders can be conjured up with a single click of the mouse button**

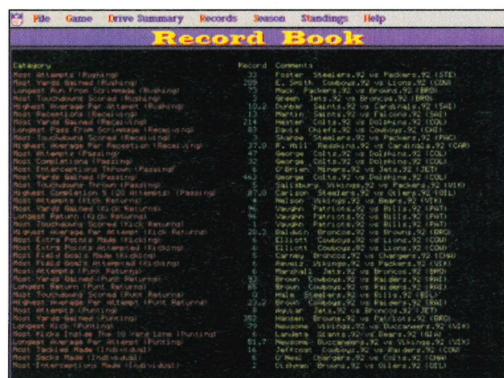


**Wading through the multitude of plays on the selection screen may look daunting, but many of the calls are extremely similar**

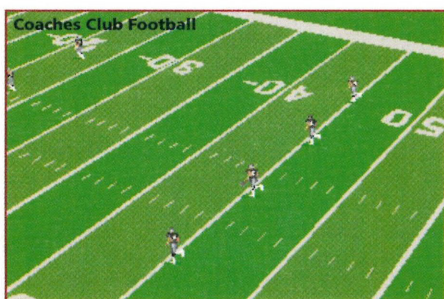
previous football sim. This could be one of the game's best features, as it is a full draft from well over a thousand pros. Unfortunately, you have to do the entire draft yourself, or let the computer do it all – there is no halfway house whereby one team can only be human controlled. Further options cater for post-draft trading between clubs.

***Other features of*** this comprehensive opening menu package include a huge stat book and a game plan mode in which your team calls play automatically based on a predefined plan that you have put together before the start of the game (ie. in second down and short situations, you would probably specify a powerful running play to be called 70% of the time, throwing a surprise pass in for the other 30%).

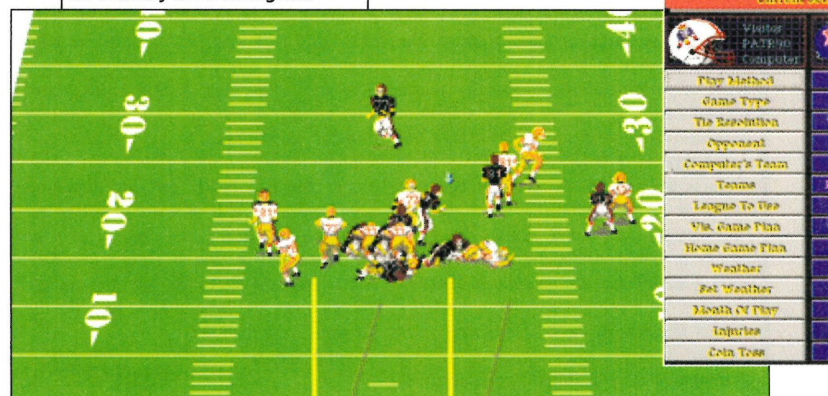
**What a mess – the Bengal's fullback rips through as both lines dissolve into chaos. Visual clarity isn't exactly NFL's strong suit**



**C**oaches Club Football is another game that comes complete with a full set of NFL player and team names, although only from one season. NFL is definitely the first game to take a pure managerial slant. In terms of depth and realism it is just outclassed by Coaches Club and especially superior simulation, both graphs



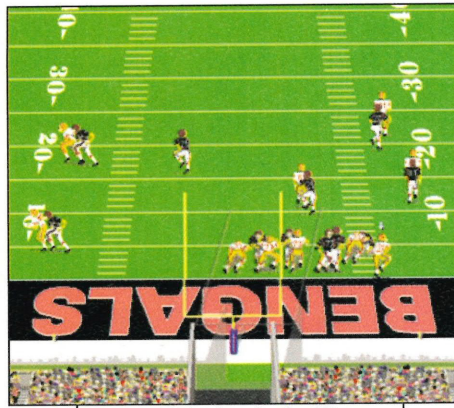
### Coaches Club Football







The Bengals threaten a blitz - the niners try hard not to look worried



Electing to play it safe, the 49'ers go with a power sweep to the right



Seven yards upfield, the Fullback makes a headlong run to nowhere

## 'The players move quite quickly but jerkily, making them look like demented Thunderbird puppets on amphetamines'

tactical simulation, and no visual extravaganza is expected, but judged against contemporary titles NFL falls badly short in this particular department.

**Laziness seems to** have affected NFL's graphic design. Small things such as the background colour of the main menu (grey) clashes with some of the team's helmets which are printed in the foreground - namely the Cowboys, Lions, and others. More effort could certainly have been made on this front.

In the game itself, play calling is facilitated by selecting either from a screen full of set plays and formations, or by designing your own. Upon first glance, the multitude of included plays seems impressive and certainly would look fairly daunting to anyone but the expert. Scan through them all, however, and it soon becomes apparent that a lot of the options are extremely similar.

An extensive option list has to be initially ploughed through

Choosing offensive plays is where this feature of the game is most prominent. In theory, you have six different formations and 54 different pass calls, giving a total of 324 possible combinations. Such is the repetition involved, there are more like 18 pass calls, and the formations make no real odds, save for putting an extra receiver or tight-end on the field.

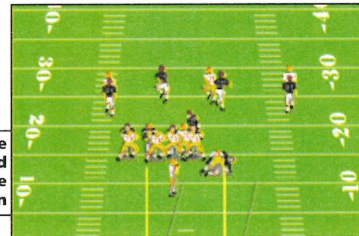
Defensively, things are more varied, with different stunts, blitzes and coverages available. Even so, you will still find that many plays are nigh-on duplicated, with only the tiniest changes made between two supposedly separate tactics. At least formation changes on defence make considerably more impact on the call than on offence.

Pre-set plays do not have to be used - there is also the opportunity to define your own. Again, this is a promising sounding deal and should make up for the rather limited pre-set options, but this is just not the case. Plays are designed via a list of 10 menus, in which you specify pass or run, coverages, blitzes, zone types and the like.

This compares with Front Page Sports Football, in which you are free to design anything you want, including completely

illegal plays. This freedom beats the pants off NFL's tree structure style play designer - and NFL is supposed to be the more complex strategy orientated program.

This simplicity is also carried over into the player ratings. Each pro is rated in just two categories - pass and run. Depending on the position of the player, these stats can take on a different emphasis. For instance, the run rating for an offensive linesman measures his run blocking power, whereas the run value for a running denotes both his speed and strength. It's not as if this concept is particularly ill conceived - but it is rather boring.



Eight out of the Quarterbacks said they prefer the shotgun formation

### appraisal

**W**hen I heard that NFL was coming out on the PC, I was very interested. However, it was a big letdown. A tactical sim should stimulate the mind of the dedicated fan, but NFL simply fails to perform. I found that it was more constraining and superficial than Front Page Sports Football. Graphically and sonically, it is certainly inferior to its competitors. NFL just doesn't make it past the training camp cut.

DARREN ALLAN

### second opinion

**A** multitude of American football simulations are on the market right now and competition is stiff, so to beat a

game like *Unnecessary Roughness*, NFL really should have offered more than just a poor management game. It would have been a lot better if the changes made to the team were more apparent and team tactics and offensive/defensive moves made more of an impact on the outcome of the game. As it is, no sense of interaction is generated, which is essential if there's no action to be had. The sound is poor and links together pretty terribly despite the samples being fairly imaginative and clear. Graphically it's a let down with only a few frames of animation for each move and on a 386 you can forget it; the players run, tackle and throw like donkeys. If you're a fan of the Super Bowl than maybe you should look elsewhere.

PETE HAWLEY

PCA SCORE **57%**

### data bank

CONVENTIONAL MEMORY  
585k

MINIMUM MEMORY  
3MB XMS

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS  
386DX

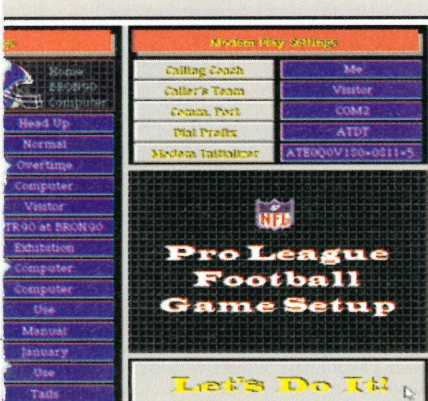
OPTIMUM  
486 DX 33

HARD DISK SPACE  
10MB

GRAPHICS  
VGA

SOUND CARDS  
Adlib, SoundBlaster or 100% Compatible

CONTROLS  
Mouse, Keyboard





# EVASIVE ACTION

**PUBLISHER** Mindscape  
**CONTACT** 0444 246 333  
**TEAM** Glyn Williams  
**PRICE** £34.99  
**RELEASE DATE** Out Now

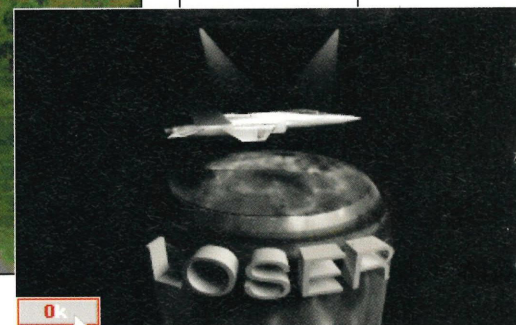
*In my opinion the Germans in the air must be beaten at their own game, which is cunning'*

MAJOR JAMES MCCUDDEN



Evasive's highly impressive introductory sequence sets the scene effectively

The game lets you know you are a failure in no uncertain terms



*From the mist clouded skies of the First World War to Wing Commander style space battles, take a tour through the ages of aerial combat*



aking the noble art of dogfighting as its primary subject matter, *Evasive Action*, or *Duel for the Sky* as it is subtitled, simulates air combat throughout the twentieth century and beyond. Stressing the pure arcade elements of conflict, this is definitely not a sim for the technically minded Falcon 3.0 fanatic. You won't need a keyboard overlay to get to grips with this baby.

Flicking through the various options on the main menu screen presents the budding Biggles with a number of choices. First and foremost, the one on one dogfight to the death which is the main focus of the game is not the only activity you can engage in. Also available is an air race, in which the objective is to beat the opposing plane around a circuit of obstacles, and an 'attacker' game, which

Gentlemen, please choose your weapon - the Sopwith Camel or the Red Baron style triplane

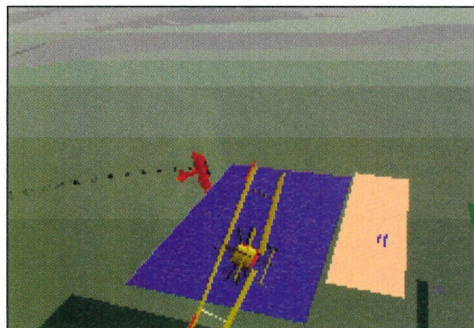
is basically airborne tag in which you touch with bullets.

Opposition is provided either by the computer, or by use of a split screen two player option. All players who log onto the game are rated by their performances on a scale of one to 10, and this enables the computer to simulate any human player you wish.

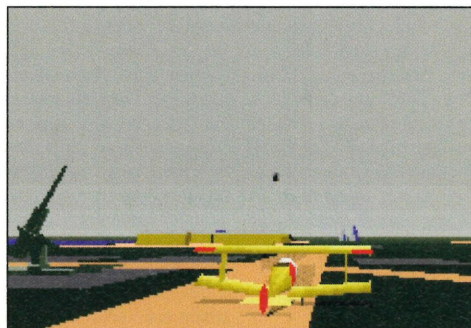
Four different time zones are simulated, from the First and Second World Wars, to modern day and space combat, with a choice of two fighters from each zone. Best of one, three or five bouts can be selected.

**Launching off** on your first flight is a simple enough affair, with a quick press of return starting an automatic take-off sequence and another raising the landing gear. Simplicity is the watchword as far as controlling your kite is concerned, the only commands being the standard yoke controls (push forward to dive, right to roll right, etc...) and two fire buttons. Button two is used

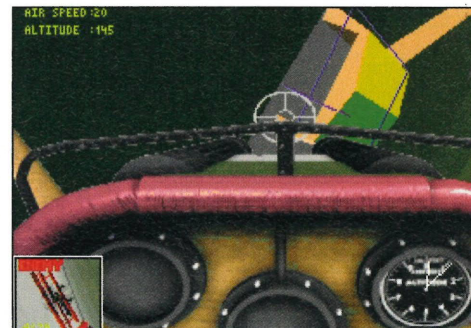
*World War 1 Back to the bad old days of 1917, at the very beginning of the history of aerial warfare.*



Ha Ha Ha! A direct hit on the infamous Baron's left wing - that'll teach him to be German



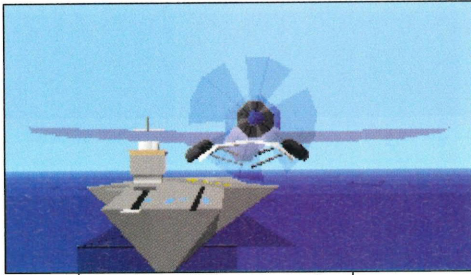
Check engine, check goggles, check ridiculously oversized scarf - chocks away chaps, what ho!



Stunt flying in true barn-storming style, although my approach leaves a little to be desired. A series of these stunts have to be flown in an air race



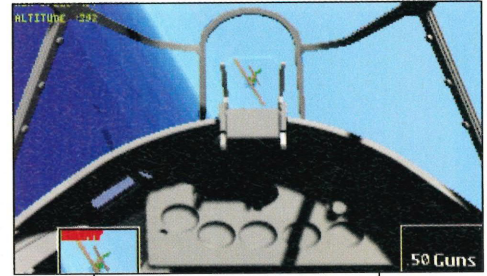
## World War 2 Rommel – Gunner Who? Revisiting the Second World War, the scene of some infamous aerial conflicts



Launching off from the carrier and preparing for battle



Bad news – being tailed by the enemy is not a tactic in the good book of combat manoeuvres



Ah! this is more like it – give him both barrels Ginger

to select weaponry and button one to pepper the enemy with whatever you have chosen. This ease of use certainly gives the game a strong initial hook, as you can trundle out of the hangar and get straight into the thick of the action without any fuss.

**Smoothness in** both the presentation and the graphics are very noticeable features. Menu screens are well laid out and easy to use and the rotating 3D representations of the different planes are gorgeous.

In game graphics leave something to be desired. Whilst they are very smooth and the overall speed of the update is reasonable, the visuals are bland. Compared to the ground level detail of TFX, or the smoothly contoured and textured hills of Strike Commander, they just don't stand out.

This applies to all four different time



Even in the two player game external views are available – quite handy for searching the skies

zones that you can sample. The First World War section is possibly the most graphically impressive, with at least some ground detail in the form of barns, runways and howitzer field guns, combining with a nicely dark sky to form an effective atmosphere.

Looking at the scenery in the two middle time zones, the Second World War and the 1993 eras, almost takes you

back to the days of 'Knights of the Sky'. Sparse is something of an understatement – ground detail is quite limited. Only the odd city here and there in the 1993 scenario save these middle sections from being almost totally devoid of any real ground features to speak of.

This may be because the designers wanted the game to run at a decent

pace on a bog standard 386, but what is wrong with the traditional method of adjustable detail levels? The final scenario set in deep space is an improvement, with various authentic looking space paraphernalia dotted about the place.

**In-cockpit presentation,** on the other hand, manages to be simple and effective. Radar varies from zone to zone, obviously there is none in the first scenario, but you are given the use of a handy little indicator in the bottom left hand corner of the screen, which displays a large red arrow that constantly points in the direction of your enemy.

The more sophisticated modern radar displays your enemy as a red dot and the various stunts you can do (which mark out the course and must be performed in an air race) as blue dots. It's all very simple and in keeping with the uncomplicated arcade feel.

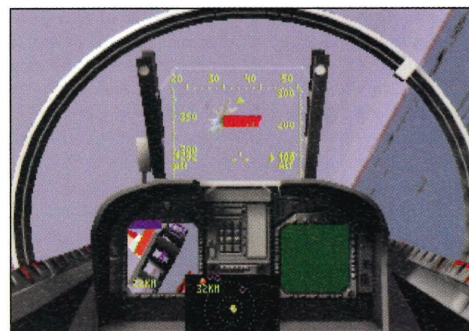
Certain elements of the gameplay manage to irritate intensely. For starters, it is far too easy to fly into the ground. There is very little sense of perspective as regards the floor from the cockpit view and even the external views are no help due to the lack of a shadow. All the time you have to keep one eye on the

# 'There really ought to be a bit more difference between the handling of a Sopwith Camel and a Mig 29'

## Present Day Conventional modern warfare is simulated in the third zone, with Russian Migs facing F-18s



Fly under the oil rig to refuel and re-arm. These stunts are quite tricky, especially at high speeds



Just in case you were unsure, the program spells out the fact that this is your enemy



The actual plane graphics are nice. Shame the landscapes aren't as impressive



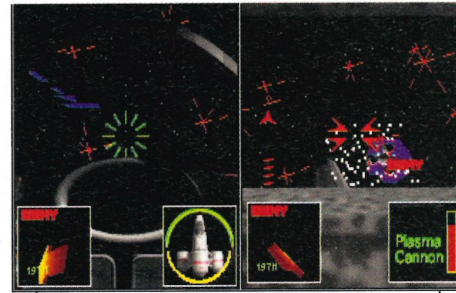
*Future Futuristic two player combat in the year 2064, duelling with plasma cannons and smart missiles*



Launching from their respective motherships, two players ready themselves for some serious laser overheating



To be, or not to be? That is the question facing the homicidal maniacs of the future, as they view each other from a safe distance



Player one (on the left) is in trouble - his rear shields turn yellow on the status display as his opponent locks onto him from behind

► altitude, which is a right pain when you are trying to concentrate on executing your high gravity combat manoeuvres with some precision.

The manner in which the various craft handle seems too similar by half. In a way, this is not surprising given the arcade slant of the program, but there really ought to be a bit more difference between the handling of a Sopwith Camel and a Mig 29.

However, in other areas more effort has been made on the realism front, with the implementation of black and red outs for modern combat situations and the authentic replication of weaponry throughout the ages.

**Aside from the** standard aerial grudge match, races can be staged, with several different courses from each time zone. Whoever finishes first wins, surprisingly enough, but this is really a diversion and not half as much fun as the main combat action.

The race route is marked out by a string of stunts, which all have to be completed in order to finish. These consist of barns, oil rigs, bridges, space stations - it all depends on the chosen time period - which have to be flown under or through. Stunts are also present in the dogfighting sections, where negotiating one re-fuels and re-arms your ship, acting as a kind of glorified pick-up.

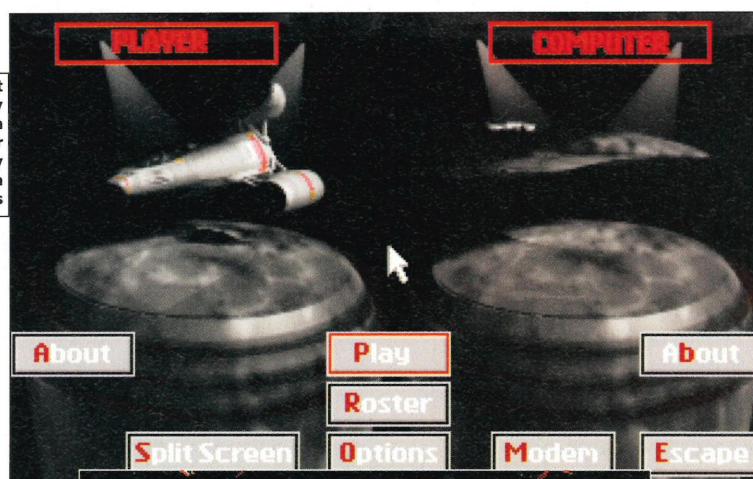
Finally, the game of airborne tag is really not any different to the

dogfighting section. One player has a set time limit to score a hit on his or her opponent and scores a point if successful. Then the roles are reversed, and evasion becomes the order of the day. Hardly a huge leap in the variety stakes as concerns the gameplay.

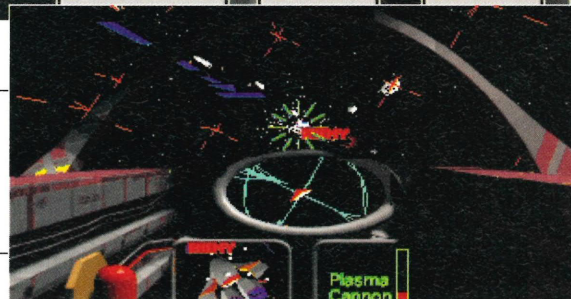
Without a shadow of a doubt, the two player mode is the hi-point of the game. The programmers have plumped for a vertical division of the screen rather than the more traditional horizontal method. This works very effectively and the thrill of locking on to your adversary's tail and strafing him with .50 cal is nothing short of immense.

One very important thing that must be noted, however, is that although the game runs well enough on a 386 in one player mode, two player action slows the frame update down pretty badly. Owners of 486s on the other hand won't experience any of these problems which is good news for them.

Space Age combat - the crafts slowly rotate around on these rather beautifully detailed option screens



Quite a thrill can be gained from getting the enemy in your sight and really letting rip. Highly therapeutic



One of the other stunts in the WW1 section - flying between two monstrous Zeppelins



## appraisal

**E**vasive action runs along the lines of the Jekyll and Hyde myth. On the one hand, the game is a little bland, while on the other the two player mode is exceptionally gripping. Visually, it certainly isn't anything special, what with the level of ground detail seeming somewhat spartan, especially in comparison with other modern flight sims. One player mode is not particularly inspiring, as the intentionally basic 'arcade' feel to the game seems somewhat limiting, at least to a certain extent. However, the two player game will be the cause of a great many late night sessions for those who have a 486. Others will only really be able to meet the Mr. Hyde side of the game, so to speak, and I am not sure that this would be a particularly worthwhile exercise.

DARREN ALLAN

## second opinion

**I** thoroughly enjoyed tailing Darren's various aircraft and blowing them out of the sky throughout the annals of history. But enough of this petty office rivalry. Evasive is one of those rare breed of games that offers two player combat. In EA the sky's the limit. It's much more satisfying to pickle a human opponent than a programmed machine and for people without the access to a modem link it's great. The techy side is almost completely eradicated, so if you are an action fan and cringe at the mere thought of head-up displays and target designators then don't be put off by your initial impression of the screen shots which at first glance may look like a sim. As a one player it's an average blaster, only showing its true colours as a duet.

PETE HAWLEY

PCA SCORE **80%**

## data bank

CONVENTIONAL MEMORY  
560k

MINIMUM MEMORY  
4MB

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS  
386 sx

OPTIMUM  
486 dx 33

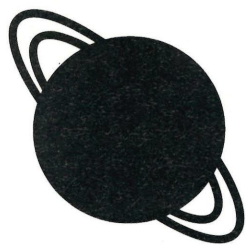
HARD DISK SPACE  
12-15 MB

GRAPHICS  
VGA

SOUND CARDS  
Roland, SoundBlaster, 100% Compatible

CONTROLS  
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**CONTACT** 0727 868005  
**TEAM** In House  
**PRICE** £39.99  
**RELEASE DATE** Out Now

*Discover the delights of financial juggling in the airline world*

**O**n the side of the game, a bold caption proudly boasts the fact that this is the 'ultimate airline company simulator game'. Dare the cynics amongst us suggest that this is the only airline company simulator game?

Starting from scratch, the idea is to build up your airline empire and fill your pockets, competing against up to three other human or computer controlled opponents. Business is controlled via a

*'Everyone lives by selling something'*

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON 1850-1894

series of icons at the bottom of the main screen, which consists of a world map with various different highlighted airports. This is the crux of the game – purchasing contracts for chartered routes between major airports and opening profitable routes of your own.

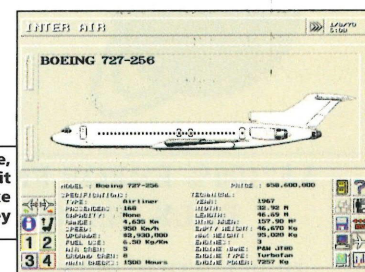
These deals can govern both movement of cargo and passengers. Chartered runs bring fixed profits, but fines if you miss the set deadlines.

Your fleet of planes, which can consist of anything from Boeings to Hercules and even Concorde, can be sold off at any time. Wheeling and dealing in shares is also part of the fiscal equation, although you haven't exactly got the whole stock market to play with.

The computer opposition is of a reasonable standard and the game is not particularly easy to master. If an airline business sim is your 'thing', then fair enough, this isn't terrible but it is extremely dry and boring. A much more interesting challenge could be found in similar business/empire games, such as A-Train, or Railroad Tycoon.

DARREN ALLAN **26%**

**Pick a plane, pick a route – sit back and make loads of money**



## data bank

**CONVENTIONAL MEMORY** 600k

**MINIMUM MEMORY** None

**MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS** 286 16Mhz

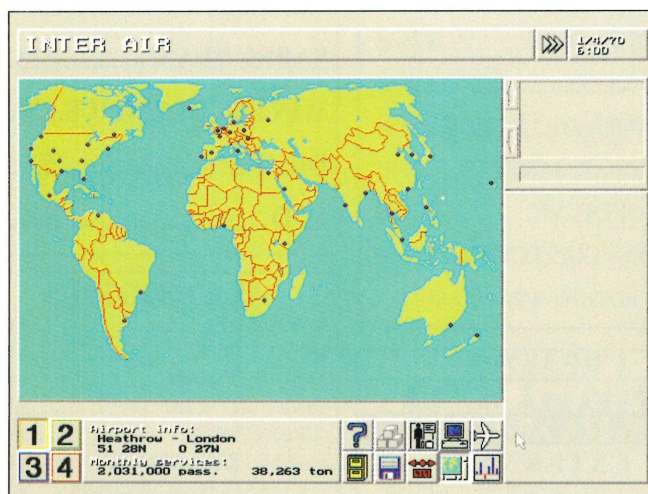
**OPTIMUM** 286 16Mhz

**HARD DISK SPACE** 700k

**GRAPHICS** VGA

**SOUND CARDS** None

**CONTROLS** Mouse



**Look out British Airways – here comes Inter Air, with cheap package deals, a quality in-flight movie and deluxe sick bags**

# STARLORD

**PUBLISHER** MicroProse  
**CONTACT** 0454 326532  
**TEAM** Mike Singleton  
**PRICE** £44.99  
**RELEASE DATE** Out Now

*For centuries man has been gazing into the sky, waiting for the day when he will communicate with the starlords*

**B**ack in September, MicroProse were demo-ing one of the most visually stunning space exploration games around. Now it has finally materialized they may have missed the boat, or should I say the starship, because plenty has

happened since then and it will now inevitably be compared to Elite II.

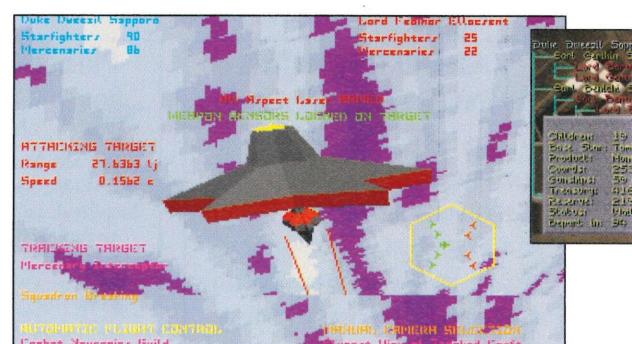
But the game remains the same and it really is full of visual delight, as we reported back in our first issue.

The battle sequences are lifted

straight out of a sci-fi movie, with nine different views showing colourful starships constantly flying past in formation like the Red Arrows. And even the bridge, the main screen which brings you crashing down to earth in most games, has a rather attractive spinning globe to hold your attention.

Smoothly shaded planet surfaces are important because most of your time is spent in the orbit of one of 1,000 star systems, either docking there while you beam down to the planet surface and enjoy the hospitality of an ally or gliding past in pursuit of a fleet of enemy ships.

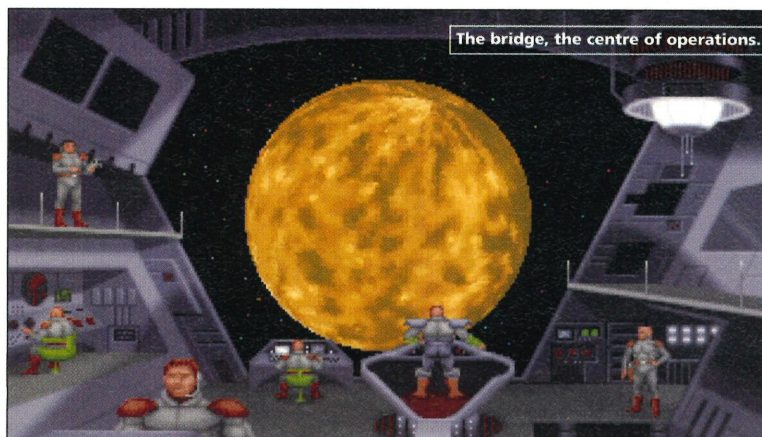
The sight most welcome to your battle weary eyes will be the colours of your own base planet, for which you are responsible and which you might need



to fly back to defend if a hostile starlord takes a fancy to it. And don't worry if you need to fly half way across the galaxy to get there. Hyperspace has really taken space travel beyond the speed of light.

**Ancient civilisations** thought there were Gods in the skies and they weren't far wrong. In fact they are filled with Lords, Earls, Dukes, Kings and Emperors, trading, travelling and fighting in much the same way we humans are here on Earth. The Emperor is constantly being overthrown and star systems turning hostile to your proud name and banner.

When you arrive at a place, you have a primitive textual exchange with an ugly





# 'ALLO 'ALLO'

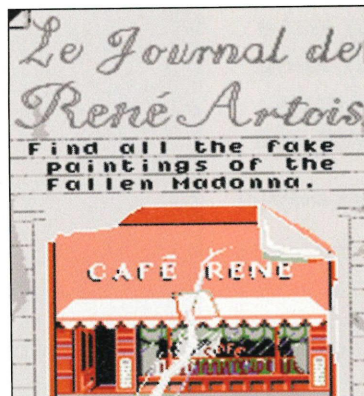
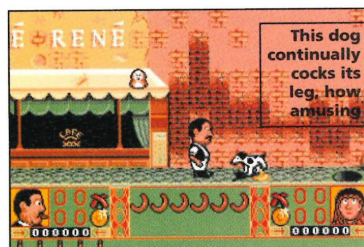
**PUBLISHER** Alternative Software  
**CONTACT** 0977 797 777  
**TEAM** In House  
**PRICE** £24.99  
**RELEASE DATE** Out Now

## 'Good Moaning'

THAT ENGLISH POLICEMAN OUT OF 'ALLO 'ALLO

*Listen very carefully  
 I shall say zis only  
 wance... c'est dire*

**N**ow, where do I begin. Firstly, who at the BBC is responsible for issuing licences for their TV programmes? Well whoever he/she is I think they're going to be in trouble. This game is one of those rare



Rene's mission is laid out in plain terms. Get out here and get on with it, NOT!

opportunities we PC owners get for nostalgic journeys into the past, back to those heady spectrum days when blocky graphics and poor animation ruled the day. The major difference being of course that a lot of Spectrum games were and still are very playable.

The graphics are badly drawn and the animations are very limited, which is a terrible start if you're going to write a game, while next on the list is the most important part of a game's structure and that is its gameplay.

René is the part you play and your task is to recover the portrait of the fallen Madonna. To do this a forger must be retrieved from a Gestapo office

and swapped with the real thing.

Along the way items must be collected and thrown at other characters. The German guards get knocked out for a short time and the ladies in the game hitch up their skirts and distract the guards for long enough for you to evade their clutches, and that really is all there's to be said.

Playing 'Allo 'Allo is a bit like going to the dentist, in that it is equally as painful and gives the distinct feeling of pulling teeth. Sound is poor and the infantile humour becomes very grating in a very short time, which is just like the program itself in my book. Altogether it is a poorly presented graphical version.

*If you are one* of the many who found the original program funny then you're going to be left disappointed with the result.

It's not amusing in the slightest, doesn't play well and has about as much appeal as an afternoon lying under a guillotine waiting for it to eventually fall. It's awful. Poor. Don't bother even spending all of your hard earned cash on it.

PETE HAWLEY

PCA SCORE **26%**

Astounding graphics abound, notice the french maid's right leg being four times bigger than her left



## data bank

### CONVENTIONAL MEMORY

640k base memory

### MINIMUM MEMORY

N/A

### MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

286

### OPTIMUM

12Mhz

### HARD DISK SPACE

N/A

### GRAPHICS

VGA/EGA

### SOUND CARDS

None

### CONTROLS

Joystick, Keyboard

# 'Combat is complex and involved, unlike the main bulk of the game'



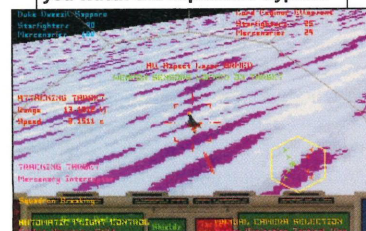
In Dynasty mode: a whole family tree of starlord relatives

alien who looks like a reflection in a fairground's hall of mirrors. Diplomatic service candidates

need not apply – either they want a fight and to extract some money out of you, or they ask you round for dinner.

So what it all boils down to is research. Know your planets, your ruling families, their strengths and weaknesses and plan your course accordingly. A library provides all the background, while the chart room is where you plot a course. Just like clinching a business deal really, but on an intergalactic scale.

In the battle sections, you can hand over control to the computer while you watch the impressive flypasts



Nine different views on the space battle, as you orbit the watery planet, controlling your capital ship at the head of your platoon



## appraisal

**L**ike a bashful young beauty, Starlord will arouse extreme emotions in you. The strategy element may well insult your intelligence while the battle sequences will blow your mind. But there isn't much personality behind this pretty face. Combat is complex and involved, unlike the main bulk of the game. Trading is on a simple buy/how many, text basis, surely outdated by now, as are the confrontations with other starlords and

stills of action not incorporated properly in the gameplay. The dynasty and interconnected family tree approach to populating the heavens was a good move – it makes your encounters seem more personal and relevant. The set-up which has you running Red Dwarf-style from the bridge to the chart room and then gazing out into the depths of space, manages to evoke a sci-fi vision of a high-tech future so far only captured realistically on film.

DAVID LONGWORTH

PCA SCORE **87%**

## data bank

### CONVENTIONAL MEMORY

590k

### MINIMUM MEMORY

2MB

### MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

386 16Mhz

### OPTIMUM

486

### HARD DISK SPACE

8MB

### GRAPHICS

VGA

### SOUND CARDS

Adlib, Roland, SoundBlaster

### CONTROLS

Joystick, Mouse, Keyboard



# SABRE TEAM

PUBLISHER	Krisalis
CONTACT	0709 372290
TEAM	In-House
PRICE	£29.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now

*'Now, you mummy's darling, get a rift on them boots. Definitely shine 'em my little curly-headed lambs, for in our mob war or no war, you die with clean boots on.'*

GERALD KERSH 1911-1968 BRITISH AUTHOR, JOURNALIST

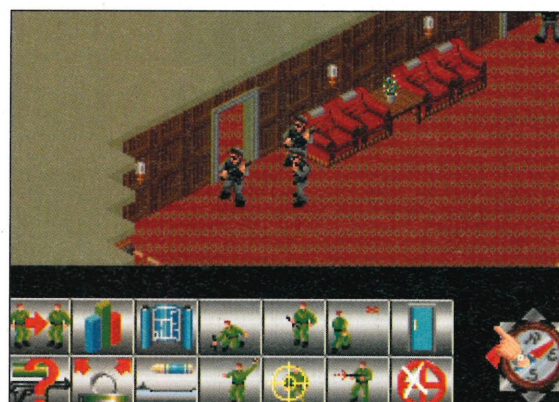


SAS men have to be prepared for every eventuality, and that includes CS gas

*After the spectacular Libyan Embassy siege of some 10 years ago the world's mass media, not to mention the general public, went SAS crazy. Fancy a go?*



This is undoubtedly the image conjured up in everyone's mind by the Special Air Service



Your crack squad prepares to secure another area of the captive embassy



Confrontation has arisen during the enemy's turn. If you have enough Action Points left, take a pot shot



Standing over a mutilated terrorist really brings a lump to your throat. Success is sweet

At one time it was every kid's dream that, just maybe, they may find themselves among the ranks of the British Army elite – the SAS. What a life! Nothing to do all day but storm a couple of embassies, lay out a few Middle Eastern terrorists and rescue some extremely grateful hostages.

Of course, at those tender years you certainly don't consider all the possible connotations that are implied, like stun grenades exploding in your face, or even, heaven forbid getting shot.

Many would say that such a gung-ho attitude in children is unhealthy, and indeed some would even go as far as to blame video games of this type for causing it.

But it does exist and for this reason Krisalis are hoping that Sabre Team, which in case you're wondering derives from the name given to one of the actual crack squads, will appeal to the kid in all of us and hopefully make them some money.

There are five hotbeds of terrorist activity in the game and you must lead the Sabre Team into each one and successfully neutralise the situation with the minimum of fuss. Each scenario complements the others, with enough variety to keep your overall interest level peaking pretty high.

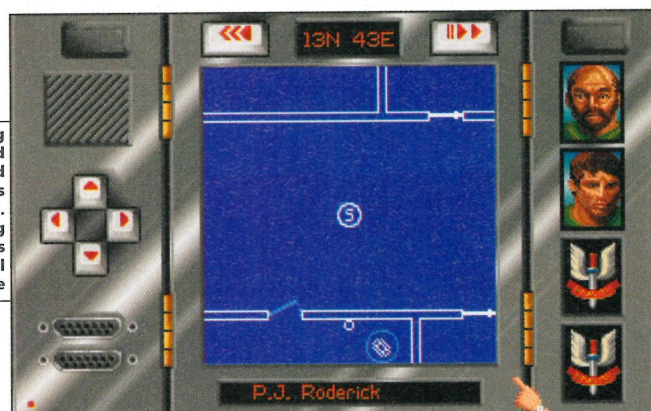
There is the mandatory embassy siege, a mission to stop a gang of madmen who have locked themselves in a nuclear bunker with access to the arming codes for enough warheads to destroy much of the world, and an under siege type hostage situation on an ocean liner packed with innocent civilians.

As you would expect, although the situations are very different in terms of storyline, the gameplay is identical throughout. The game utilises the cult favourite action point system made famous by a Krisalis classic from the past, namely Laser Squad. Experienced users





The strategic map is there to aid your planning. Looking at it uses action points though



Keeping your squad tight and together is vital. Wandering off like this is virtual suicide

The stereotyped image of the glamorous life of an SAS man is blown to pieces by Sabre Team

of that particular game will be immediately at home with much of the method of play, although there have been numerous additions which

make a quick read through of the manual essential.

For the uninitiated, action points is a very simple method of playing strategy games that allows you to get an element of excitement in there along with all the thought and planning that many people love so dearly.

Basically what it entails is that depending on their skill and experience each soldier is given a number of points which they can use during a turn. The more skill and experience, the more points they are awarded. Every move your characters make costs them a set number of 'action points' and once used up the character is unable to do anything more until the next turn. Confused? Here's an example.

Let's say that one of your troopers has 10 of his action points remaining and wants to move a step forward. Doing so

uses up another four points leaving him with only six, meaning that if he wants to carry out an action that requires 10 points, such as firing a shot he will have to wait until his next turn. It may sound complex, but once you begin playing everything soon falls into place.

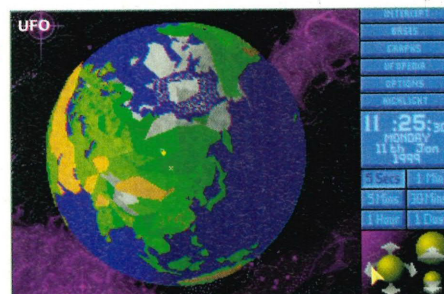
When all of your squad have carried out their movement for that particular turn it's time for the terrorists to have a go. If at any time a confrontation arises during either side's turn, or a member of the opposing side comes into your line of sight, you will get an opportunity to take him out so to speak.

This still requires action points, so it is always a good idea to end your turn with some in reserve so as not to leave



## déjà-vu

**S**abre Team is a game that will undoubtedly remind the majority of people of *Laser Squad*, also by Krisalis. This was the unofficial prequel to *UFO - Enemy Unknown* and became a cult game almost the moment it was released. Up to this present day it is still considered by many to be their favourite all time game, held by some in the same high regard as others hold for, say *Elite*. It only differed in terms of storyline, this being a fight against alien forces rather than terrorists, and of course being an older game, is nowhere near as advanced in terms of gaming engine. If you like *Sabre Team* though you would be well advised to seek out a copy.



Whenever possible it is advisable to get your men to the cover of the walls, making them a less viable target

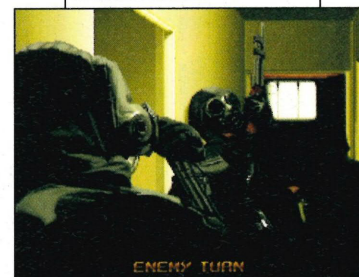
your men stranded. It is also good if possible to not leave them out in the open in the middle of a room. If you can, get them to the perimeter walls before ending a turn.

Things are not as straightforward when it comes to actual combat with the enemies, regardless of action points. For a start, until you actually physically see an enemy through a squad member's own eyes it will be as if he is invisible.

This spices things up for the simple reason that it means a foe can quite easily come up behind you unnoticed.

Even if you can see an enemy though, it doesn't mean that you can automatically loose off a couple of rounds in his direction. He must, at the time of the shot, fall into what is known as your soldier's line of sight. Basically what this means is that you can only fire if there are no obstructions in the

The enemy's turn is entirely hidden, apart from instances of confrontation



The missions are widely varied, certainly enough to keep even the most restless player occupied

'The fact of never knowing what lies in wait ►



## SABRE TEAM



► distance between you and the enemy you are attempting to take out. If there is something in the way, be it a wall, post or rail you will

find that it might be difficult to hit the target.

A particularly nice feature relating to this element of the game is the ability to fire through windows and the like, helping to create what I can only assume to be a realistic portrayal of what it is actually like to be a part of one of the squads.

The system works well considering how difficult it must have been to even come up with a concept that came even close to being accurate, let alone working out how to incorporate it into such a product. There can be no complaints about this aspect of the game as it is difficult to see how it could have been improved.

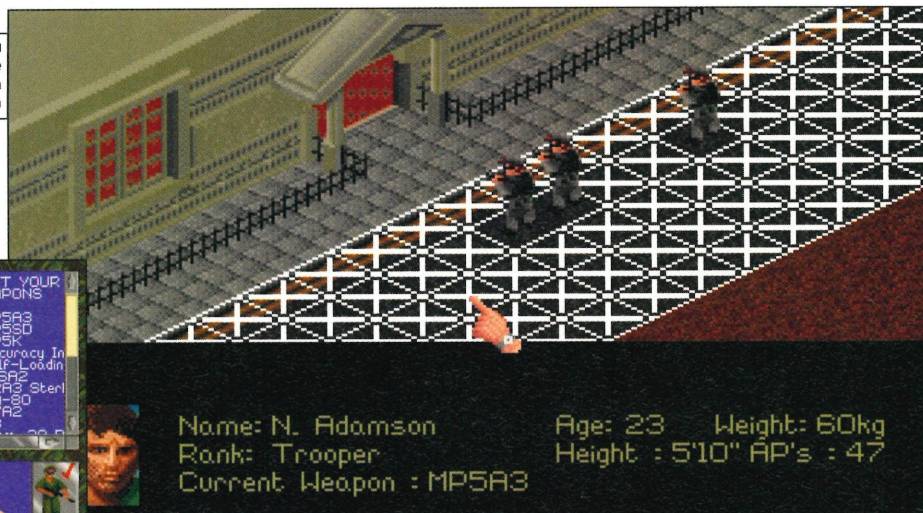
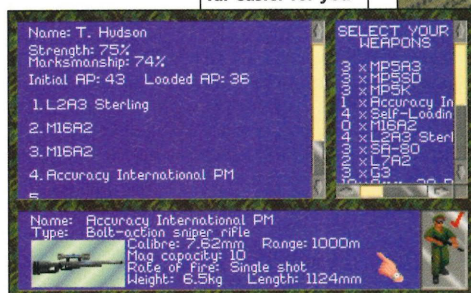
*In a game such* as this atmosphere is very important, and arguably the most vital element in successfully simulating such a tricky subject matter. It is not all-out action by any means, and sometimes it can even seem quite slow and lumbering, so building up the tension is vital if you are going to keep the player's interest.

Thankfully, Sabre Team is one of the most atmospheric games around, with the tension at times almost becoming unbearable, and this has been achieved with very little effort on the programmer's part.

The nature of the game itself does a lot to keep the excitement going with

Before each mission you can strategically place each squad member in a favourable position

Arming your squad with the right tools for the job will make life far easier for you



Each character in the squad has a detailed history of armed service for their country

## data bank

CONVENTIONAL MEMORY  
530MB

MINIMUM MEMORY  
530MB

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS  
2Mb Overall 1 Meg extended

OPTIMUM  
386 or above

HARD DISK SPACE  
7MB

GRAPHICS  
VGA

SOUND CARDS  
Roland, SoundBlaster

CONTROLS  
Mouse

This screen gives you the opportunity to check on the progress of each member



the fact of never knowing what lies in wait around the next corner spurring you on no end. Also, features such as coming up behind the terrorists without them even knowing you are there and your own soldier's ability to hear noises and pinpoint the direction they came from, all keep the excitement level high.

Obvious similarities are going to be drawn between this and MicroProse's UFO - Enemy Unknown. In many ways

they are alike but there are far too many significant differences between them to compare them comfortably. Both games will give you countless hours of pleasure and are well worth the asking price.

## appraisal

*Sabre Team is not going to be for everyone. I am certainly under no illusions about that, but for anyone who, like me, likes a good blend of action and strategy along with a bit of well crafted tension, they can't go far wrong with this. It has it all as far as I'm concerned. Although it will be released in direct competition with MicroProse's effort it deserves, and indeed should receive considerable success. The public's fascination with the SAS will guarantee this and to be honest I'm amazed no one has attempted to capitalise on it before.*

STEVE MCNALLY

## second opinion

*After reviewing UFO this month I have been a little spoilt by its smoother and more professional feel. Sabre Team's setting is popular for many, especially*

*those of us who remember the news footage of the SAS storming the Libyan Embassy in the early '80s and the mystique that surrounds the Special Air Service. Who dares wins proves to be a valid motto for the gameplay and more than a little strategic planning is needed to achieve anything like a successful mission, covering doors before your men move in for example. The play at times is biased towards the terrorists; it seemed every time I made a move into a room they were there waiting for me. For these situations there is a lot to remember. The animation of the team is a tad disappointing and I find the command interface a little awkward at times too. The point and click interface isn't as accurate as it could have been either. Sabre Team proves to be a more than challenging game for me and will certainly take a few tries to successfully complete the multitude of missions available.*

PETE HAWLEY

PCA SCORE **86%**

► around the next corner spurs you on no end'



# AWARD WINNERS GOLD EDITION

PUBLISHER	Empire
CONTACT	081 343 7337
TEAM	Various
PRICE	£34.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now

*'This world may be divided into those who take it or leave it and those who split the difference'*

FATHER RONALD KNOX, CLERGYMAN

*From sweaty sims to the frontiers of space, and back down to beebop-a-do-la platform antics, come join the party*

## SENSIBLE SOCCER

Some time ago, a computer called the Amiga was the battleground for a clash of the titans between two football games.

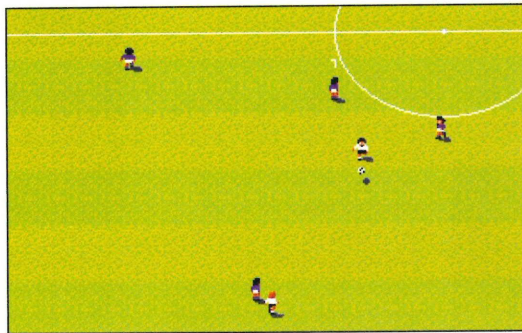
One of these was imaginatively named Kick Off – the other Sensible Soccer. Some liked one, some the other, but with such passion that the

equation was mutually exclusive. Play one, and you played it to death, and automatically hated the other.

Arguing the toss between the two is a pointless exercise. It is enough to know that they are both highly acclaimed classics. However, in the past, Amiga conversions have sometimes been less than satisfactory. Happily enough, this is not the case here.

For the benefit of those few that have never set eyes on Sensible Soccer, it is a top down view, all action football game. Any number of players can compete in leagues and cups, with a host of teams available to pick from. Not only can you play with the national teams, but also with a huge number of European club sides. All the sides have authentic player names and a few star players who move faster than the others.

In true Sensible Software style the humour is here to just lighten the rigmarole attached to sport simulations. The team loading screen gives you the option to load in some imaginary teams, for example, wobbly bottom, a squad of



11 made up of various famous celebrities with bigger backsides than your average person. Dead rockstars is made up of Jim Morrison, Jimi Hendrix (without Fender) and Keith Moon to name but a few.

The music isn't as ear pleasing as the Amiga version which is definitely the benchmark as far as footie sims go, Captain Sensible being responsible for that. Sensi Soccer scrolls excellently and is another one in the eye for the critics of the PC and its lack of scrolling ability.

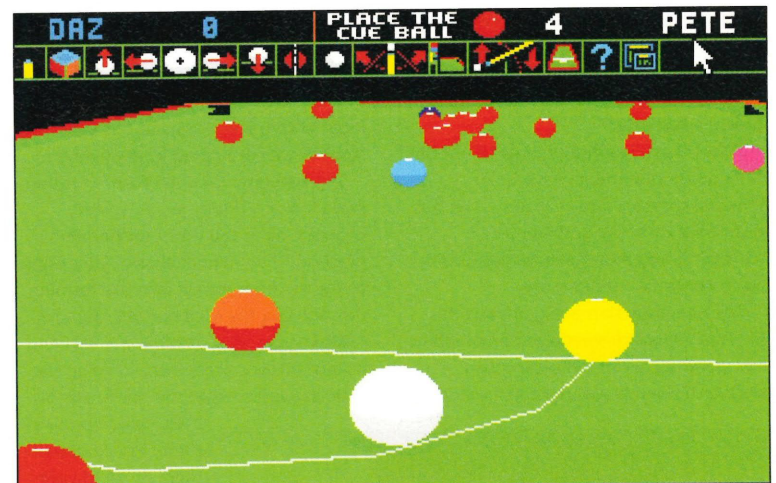
Alterations to the PC version have been kept to a minimum, which is most definitely a good thing. Graphically, Sensible runs at a suitably fast pace. The players themselves are a little bigger and as a result appear to be more pixelated (blocky) than on the Amiga, but the game doesn't really play much differently. It is still the same high class arcade style football.

Sonically, improvements have been made to the crowd noises, with a little more variety and clarity being injected. However, on the negative side the spot effects, such as the referee's whistle,

have been reduced to pathetic sounding little squeaks.

Sensible has been criticised as being somewhat unplayable on the PC before now, but in truth it is pretty damned close to the classic Amiga product. But on the whole it is still a very playable and polished program.

## JIMMY WHITE'S SNOOKER



Yes, you too can do the fabled Len Ganley stance and attain the charismatic plateau that Steve 'Interesting' Davis's personality has reached, in this 3-D snooker sim.

Well, maybe not. This is another old and classic game, but still a top notch simulation – it was certainly a big hit when it first emerged onto the Amiga.

Classic Amiga games are always a joy to play and in the past some of the PC versions have been a little disappointing. The balls themselves are a tad blocky but not bad enough to actually stop them looking round.

And funnily enough the incidental animations on the balls if you pause for too long between play are still amusing. From the fleas that dart around the baulk to the infantile antics of the balls spitting their tongues out (?) it all adds to the charm.

Surprisingly enough, the basic gameplay revolves around the rules of snooker. Everything is detailed in rather swish 3D graphics, and when you take your shot the fluid motion of the balls has to be seen to be believed.

All the options you would expect are available, from rotating the table 360 degrees, zooming in and out to chalking the cue and using side, top and back spin. In short, this is about as close to the

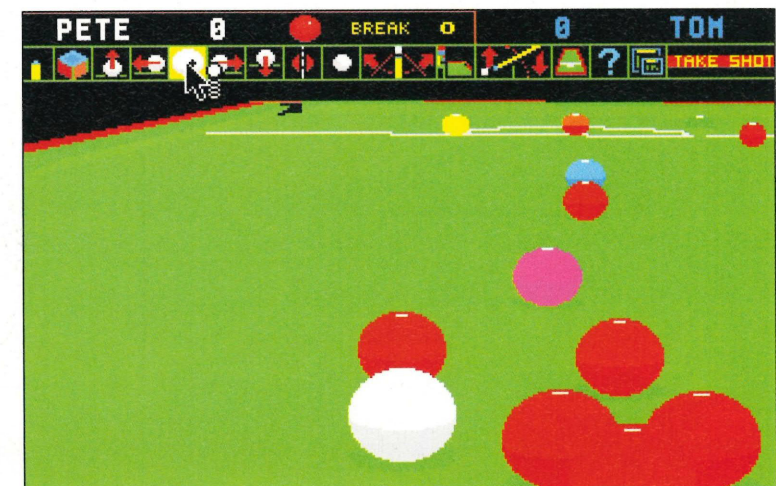
real game as you are going to get on a computer without stretching your hamstrings to dangerous levels by climbing up on the table to use the rest for the awkward shots.

Several computer opponents can be played, ranging from 'Sid Crap' to the man himself, 'Big Jimmy'. Even the supposedly amateur players are quite decent and this is a difficult game to gain competence at, especially when the perspective could never really be the same as playing for real.

In other words, a great deal of practice is necessary. And if you aren't vaguely interested in snooker or don't have much patience then you will probably find getting to grips with this a rather arduous task.

On the other hand, if you even remotely enjoy the game, even from a spectator's viewpoint, and have not already got this in your software collection, it is an excellent facet to the compilation. A real class piece of software and a fine example of professional programming from the man, Archer McLane.

Check out Pool by the same author to experience more of the same, despite smaller balls and tables and the distinct lack of smoke filled halls and Paul Newman lookalikes.





## ► AWARD WINNERS GOLD EDITION

### ZOOL

Undoubtedly Zool rears its brightly cocked head as the first platform game that showed the world the PC could actually handle this style of game pretty admirably.

Others have dutifully followed suit but their accomplishments have been minimal compared to this one – this has inspired a veritable goodie bag of merchandising material and also a coin-op to continue its namesake.

The aim, as with many games of this ilk, is to collect all the on-screen objects by bounding about, crouching and sliding to the left and right in a madcap

frenzy bidding to get your points up to friend beating level.

The screen scrolls smoothly and the infamous Ninja from the Nth dimension leaps and fires his away about in a smooth well animated kind of way.

The bad guys take the form of rather twee looking dodgy jellies, sweet beasties, bees and other unfriendly desserts. The enemies change according to the environment you're platforming through but the idea scarcely changes.

Make your way through the vast and hazard littered areas that make up the various worlds. Fight the multitude of baddies by bombing them, jumping over them or using your invulnerability shield to good effect.

Otherwise, the

Ninja of the moment has the ability to Twozool, ie split into two and therefore be able to fire twice as many bullets as is usually the case.

To give you some sort of indication of the levels to expect, these include a sweet and fruit world, a music world, a toy world and, last but by no means least, a funfair and tool world. Jovial and bright are the buzzwords here.

But you've got to remember, that's all there is to it, collecting things to get points and finishing the various levels.

It's a hell of a huge challenge, especially if you're a bit of a platform game no hoper, but there are tons of secret rooms to locate and surprises hidden here there and everywhere to keep you well on your toes.

There are a number of restart points to be located on each level. Should you

trigger these, and you'll be well advised to do so, then when you lose a life you'll begin from this point rather than the absolute start.

It's good for a few hours of quite harmless entertainment and can become incredibly frustrating the more into it you get and the more time you spend

bouncing around. And it's that element



of addictiveness that any platform game should strive for.

Platform fans can't really afford to miss it, especially with the lack of other such games on the PC to date and Zool is a welcome addition to anyone's collection. It offers hours of platform leaping and sweet munching.

### ELITE PLUS

David Braben's original Elite was a milestone in the history of computer gaming and this is essentially a souped up version of the all-time classic. For the uninitiated, Elite is a space trading and combat game, with the emphasis on the combat.

Having said this, if you aren't familiar with the nature of this game you probably think that a microchip is a small piece of deep fried potato.

To all of us who spent many happy

night's installed in the cockpit of our Cobra fleeing Vipers from space station to space station, Elite conjures up many happy adolescent memories.

And this was precisely the reason that it was so influential. Possibly for the first time it united gamers together with a real sense of community. And what a thrill if you reached that coveted Elite status before your friends!

The game was so vast, with so much data on planets, space ships and trade

that it really would take you weeks of playing and consummate skill to reach this position.

Phrases like 'corporate state' and 'anarchy', which previously meant nothing to a 13-year-old, took on a new significance. And one of the trickiest things about the gameplay, docking into a space station by revolving at the same rate as the tunnel, became second nature as we travelled the galaxy.

Improvements on Elite in the plus version are essentially superficial. Graphically, the original wire frame vectors have been replaced by fully coloured, filled-in visuals. The front end presentation has also been given a varnish. Gameplay wise, however, things are identical to the original.

Trading is used as the primary means to making money, and money is the key to greater combat success through superior firepower. In essence, this is about all there is to Elite, save for the odd special mission

thrown in here and there for added spice, like destroying the Thargoid mother ship and collecting a handsome bounty. Remember that one?

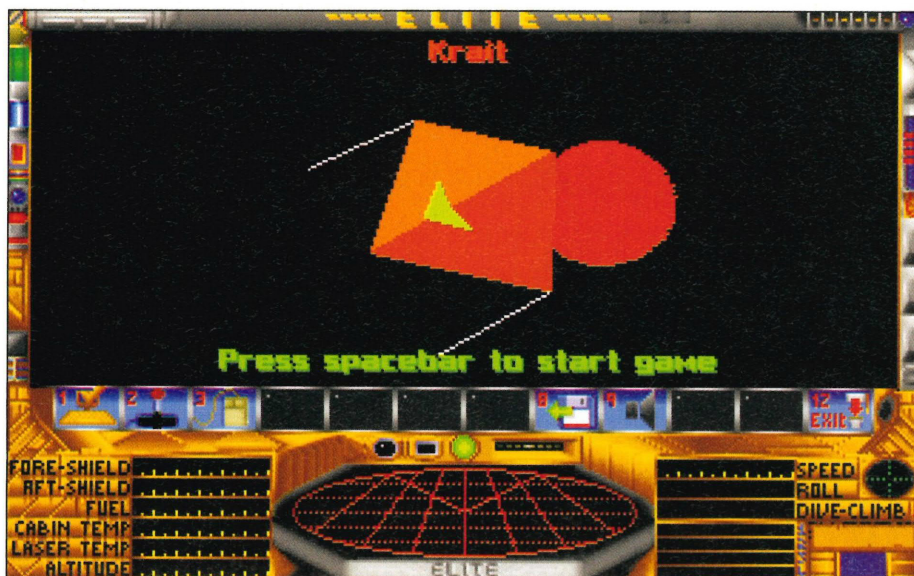
The game is also one of the first where the computer-generated world develops new technology as time progresses, more advanced weapon systems, more powerful ships and hyperdrive. Just think how many space agers include this now.

Without any shadow of a doubt, this was a successful formula in its day, but the question must be asked – is there anybody out there who hasn't yet played Elite?

Possibly not, methinks. Even if you haven't sampled the delights of piloting a Cobra around the remote edges of the universe, you will probably find the game a little too aged for your liking, and Frontier is obviously a better bet.

It carries on from where Elite left off, maintaining the basic idea whilst updating the look and feel. And some really annoying aspects have been eradicated, such as manual docking. David Braben spent five years on the sequel and it was worth it.

A classic game – yes. An old game – definitely. Having said all this, the fact remains that Elite Plus is certainly worthy of a nostalgic backward glance, if any game ever was.





# PRIVATEER: RIGHTEOUS FIRE

**PUBLISHER** Electronic Arts  
**CONTACT** 0753 549 442  
**TEAM** Chris Roberts & Team  
**PRICE** £19.99  
**RELEASE DATE** Out Now

*'Enemies are so stimulating'*

KATHERINE HEPBURN b.1907

Extra add-ons are included in Righteous Fire - how about an advanced repair droid sir?



*Here, kitty kitty... Origin gives you the chance to take more potshots at the felines of the Kilrathi empire*

**C**ertain inevitable forces are at work in the world today. Gravity is one and the unstoppable annual torture they call the 'Eurovision Song Contest' is another. But ranking up there with these top probability occurrences is the likelihood of any Origin game being followed by at least one data disk.

It's the year 2670, and still the evil Kilrathi plague the outer reaches of the Terran Confederation. Some things never change, eh?

Once again you take the role of the blue eyed boy hero, but this time your personal crusade is against religious zealots with sinister motivations as regards galactic control. Yes, plotwise this add-on doesn't exactly stretch the frontiers of the imagination.

When it comes down to it, neither did the original Privateer. When Privateer

came out a certain game called Frontier by somebody or other called David Braben was also released. Thus a clash of the Titans ensued - which space combat and trading game was the champ?

Or rather, it didn't. Privateer just didn't stand up to Elite in any real shape or form. Trading wise, Frontier blew Privateer right out of the water, and certainly Privateer's old style Wing Commander combat routines looked aged beyond belief.

**Basically, what** Righteous Fire provides the intrepid Privateer with is a selection of new missions (around two dozen), and a few more upgrades to jazz your space fighter up with.

Extra available weaponry includes the new and mighty fusion cannon, and yes, you lose the immense Stelteck gun at the start of the data disk missions in a highly annoying and predictable twist to the

story. Heavier armour, improved shield regenerators and more advanced repair droids can be acquired amongst other items.

Several new commands have also been added to your navigation computer, making it slightly easy to make your way from waypoint to waypoint. Also introduced is a kill list, which tells you if the ships you have destroyed were enemies, friends or neutral parties.

**The missions** themselves are fairly standard fare. Some of them are fairly mundane, with the more exciting ones gained from the employ of the Merchants and Mercenaries Guilds.

To be honest, if you are a Privateer fan and want more of the same, you might wish to give this a try, although I can't really recommend it even then. Otherwise, I would definitely pass on this and the Privateer series as a whole. It is not particularly inspired stuff and the depth inherent in Elite 2 outclasses Privateer and any data disks.

DARREN ALLAN

PCA SCORE **68%**

**'It is not particularly inspired stuff'**



As you can see, nothing much has changed. Same old ships, same old space stations, same old game

## appraisal

**G**old Edition is a veritable treasure trove of classic games. It lives up to its monicker with the greatest of aplomb and it's not just limited to CD-Rom drive owners too, as would seem to be the case with the majority of compilation packages at the moment. It doesn't pretend to be enhanced in any way, but just brings together a rich selection of games that can certainly stand the test of time and retain their status among the glut of visually splendid and big memory eating games emerging of late. Sensible Soccer is the best soccer action you can partake of on the PC (anybody who mentions Dino Dini at this point gets a big fat slap), being a suitably thorough conversion of the Amiga hit. Jimmy White may be going bald, but his snooker game still has a full head of hair - it is one of those paragons of the gaming world that really does stand the test of time and finds it in it to come back for the 'A' level. Zool is an excellent example of a platform romp. It's addictive, well executed and stands practically alone in this genre to date. Meanwhile Elite Plus is classic with a capital C, although possibly the weakest side of the compilation, especially now that its much lauded sequel has taken over after a five year wait. For those who missed it at the time, it adds a welcome spot of nostalgia and shows how space strategy games have moved on since early computer game days. On the whole, unless you absolutely hate fun platformers and simply loathe sports games of any nature, sweat-free or otherwise, this comes across as being superb value for money and the very stuff that future compilation efforts should take note of.

DARREN ALLAN  
 PETE HAWLEY

PCA SCORE **90%**

## data bank

**CONVENTIONAL MEMORY**  
 590+2MB

**MINIMUM MEMORY**  
 590+2MB

**MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS**  
 386SX 25

**OPTIMUM**  
 486DX 33

**HARD DISK SPACE**  
 3.8MB

**GRAPHICS**  
 VGA

**SOUND CARDS**  
 Roland, SoundBlaster

**CONTROLS**  
 Joystick, Mouse



# UFO: ENEMY UNKNOWN

**PUBLISHER** MicroProse  
**CONTACT** 0454 326 532  
**TEAM** Mythos Games Ltd  
**PRICE** £44.99  
**RELEASE DATE** Out Now

*'To knock a thing down, especially if it is cocked at an arrogant angle, is a deep delight to the blood'*

GEORGE SANTAYANA 1863 - 1952  
 AMERICAN PHILOSOPHER, POET



Team co-operation and strategic tactics take careful planning and prove to be life savers in the dark

man's reaction to the unknown throughout time has usually been a violent one. The discovery of new races and cultures in the past has led to their demise as leaders and controllers of their own destiny. Take for example the Zulu warriors of the Africa nations, the Red Indians across the length and breadth of the United States, the Aborigines of Australia and the New Zealand Maoris. Well now the tables are about to be turned.

In 1999 there is a disturbing increase in the number of UFO sightings. People start to go missing, the aliens are abducting innocent people and performing bizarre experiments on the human race. The world's population is worried.

The Japanese are the first to take any serious action to protect themselves from what they see as a real

threat to their continued existence. They set up an anti-alien force called Kiryu-Kai. But everyone soon begins to realise that it's going to take more than one country to deal with the situation. Geneva is the chosen site for a worldwide conference. Super powers gather and decide that a special United Nation's fighting force is to be initiated. XCOM is born. The world's finest fighters have gathered together and guess who you are? Their new boss.

Funding comes from all of the wealthy nations of the globe, so you've got your money and support. All that now remains is to choose the location of your first base and headquarters.

Eventually as the game progresses XCOM will be able to build up to eight bases across the globe and in such a way that they will cover each area well enough to intercept UFOs or visit landing/crash sites.

**The main screen** for strategic decision making is UFO's first striking and innovative feature, 'The Geosphere', a fully rotational globe. With the mouse, clicking on the icons at the side of the

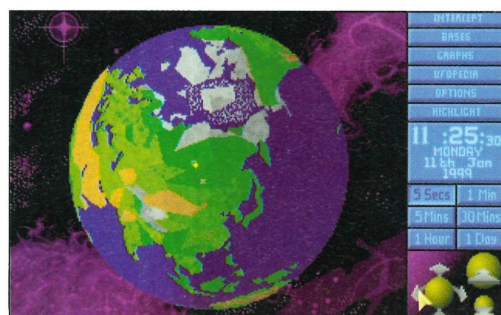
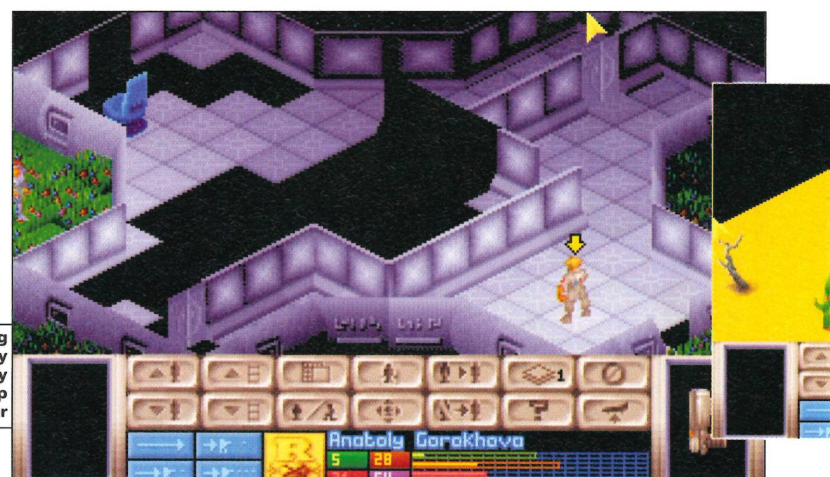


*None of that flying cup and saucer, little green men nonsense. A bleak future is ahead as alien attacks frequent the earth and man defends himself. Humanity unites, to fight, learn new technologies and hope*

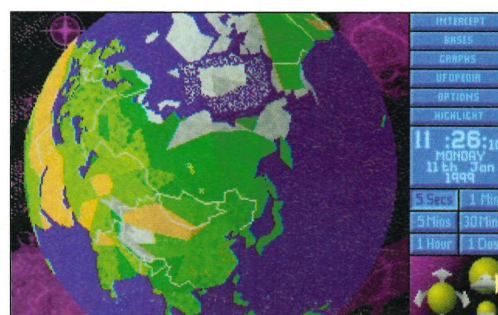


Desperately trying to pickle a small alien thing with an opportunist shot, easy pickings at first

This is a bad idea. Checking alien ships alone is definitely not a good idea, especially when all you have is a pop gun and no armour



The Geosphere command interface, X1



One of the ships is about to make UFO contact, X2



The small markers show the position of the ships, X3





The interceptor is the first aerial weapon for taking out UFOs, as long as they go slow enough

screen rotates the earth to any point on its axis. It's magnificently coloured and textured, the polar caps are there, the world's major deserts and oceans, mountain ranges and rivers. Not only are all these features visible but by using the zoom option more things are revealed – forests, countries and their respective capitals and more – a thoroughly brilliant executed control system to be sure.

*On the Geoscope* screen all your theatre of operations can be manipulated. A left click from the mouse zooms up a window with available options for that item displayed. Clicking on a base lists the available intercept aircraft to chase and shoot down

It can prove very dangerous for your health if you venture into the alien craft without the right tactics, like running for it



THE GEOSPHERE

## ‘Save the globe from eating martian food for eternity’

detected flying objects. Clicking on aircraft in flight means you can alter their flight path, engage new enemy or return to base.

On approach to the chosen UFO the air combat window zooms onto screen. This relates the distance to target, weapons available for your interceptor and the tactical approach choices you need to take, such as aggressive attack, follow, disengage, mild attack etc. A ship scan is also available to show you what you're up against.

If the intercept is successful the geospace is marked with a small cross indicating the crash site that can now be targeted by your assault squads.

*The bases are viewed* and extended on an overhead plan. The laboratories are where your scientists research the topics of your choice, which are taken from a list of available or discovered technologies.

Hangars house your current airforce and other buildings consist of general stores and living quarters. But later on you will have to invest in alien containment if you want to complete the more advanced missions. And not forgetting base defences for the imminent surprise alien assaults.

The research facilities are very similar to *Syndicate* in that while your squads are away rummaging through alien wrecks or any of the other designated target areas, the scientists continue busying away in the laboratories. Whatever you discover on your UFO pillaging expeditions is automatically transferred to the boys in the Lab.

Once research is complete, alien technologies and weaponry can be produced. The only way to defeat the technologically superior extra-terrestrial



critters is to beat them at their own game by matching their speed and firepower. And the only way to do that is to salvage their equipment and then invest in laboratory space and the hiring of scientists.

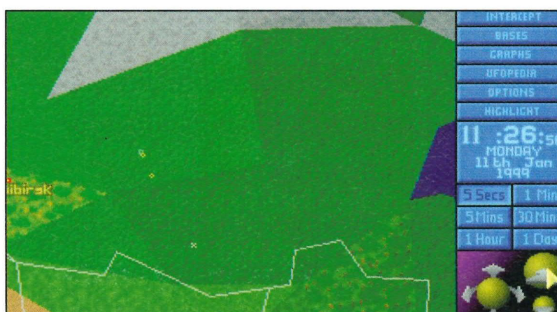
At UFO crash sites is where all these goodies can be found. Once all traces of alien slime has been removed and your mission is complete, a clean up squad is automatically sent in complete with spatulas and all the necessary gear needed to claim alien artefacts.

On the first few missions your men are faced with only minimal danger from small E.T./Communion like humanoids that carry the laser equivalent of spud guns and would much rather hide than steam in for a fight.

*If you are a fan* of *Laser Squad*, the original tactical combat game then you'll be more than familiar with the system of movement and combat procedure. All movement and action is turn based, your XCOM operatives move first and then the aliens. Unless the



Closing in for the kill, time to consider your approach, X4



The UFO's down, time to send in the grunts, X5



# UFO: ENEMY UNKNOWN



► enemy is in your line of vision then the movements are hidden.

During these hidden moves you have to sit and

wait and consider your next turn. If the enemies move into your line of fire during this time your men automatically take a snap shot at them whether it's your turn or not.

The finer details of the map are only revealed in relation to your squad's line of sight and whether or not there are any obstacles, plants or buildings in the way. Careful judgement has to be used on what time of day you begin the missions. If the aliens are involved in a terror campaign then you have no choice but to get down there and sort them out. But if you're visiting a crash site then it's going to be more beneficial as far as survival goes.

**Objects and buildings** on the ground and aliens can be strategically used for cover. What separates UFO from the rest of the crowd as far as gameplay goes is the way all the combat and sniper positioning can take place on

three levels. Climbing aboard multi-layered alien vessels and cautiously climbing stairways in deserted towns adds to the realism, as tension mounts when your men enter unknown territory. There's nothing better than knocking an alien off a nearby roof with a carefully aimed shot.

The ground based missions are the main part of the game and the most rewarding, but if you don't manage your base and domestic finances properly then you're not going to be able to develop and kill more efficiently.

From these initial missions vital equipment is discovered. In no time at all ships detected by your radar can be locked onto, but if you don't research UFO propulsion systems you'll soon find your interceptors are being left for dead by faster more cunning ETs.

The same is true throughout, as the appearing aliens increase in strength, speed and power. It's like a race and the human race is slightly lagging all the time, so if you don't keep up you'll get



Before leaving the comfort of the ship the equipment must be distributed

left behind very quickly.

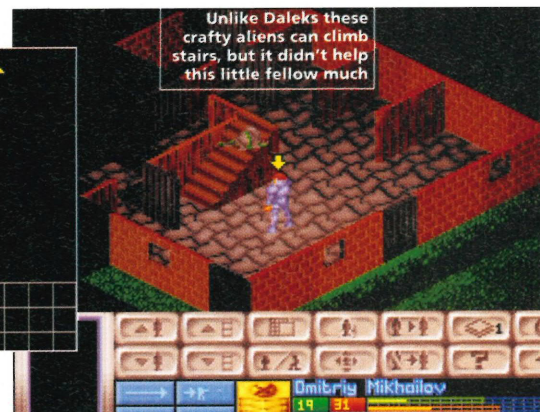
From your headquarters the radar detects craft in the vicinity, depending on how big a range your radar has. If the despatch of your fighters is delayed or they just aren't fast enough to intercept, then the UFOs will continue to appear and cause panic across the globe.

At regular intervals the XCOM collective of countries gathers to discuss your ability to manage the global defence and security against the alien threat. If any of the countries have been particularly pestered and you have failed to expel the annoyance then they will reduce their contribution to the cause.

An eye must be kept on the larger contributor's welfare to ensure healthy, regular payments.

UFO's strength lies in the enormous variety of equipment at your disposal and the non-linear missions and scenarios. Some are collecting debris for research, killing crash survivors and capturing alien leaders using stun grenades for interrogation purposes.

Unlike Daleks these crafty aliens can climb stairs, but it didn't help this little fellow much



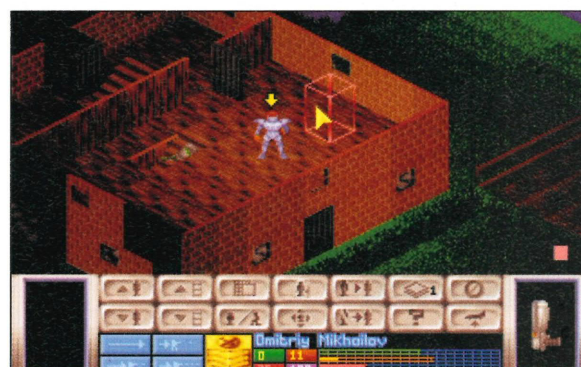
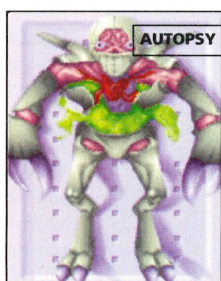
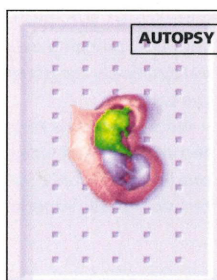
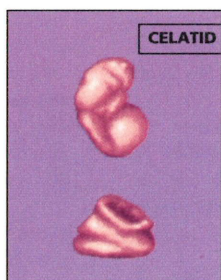
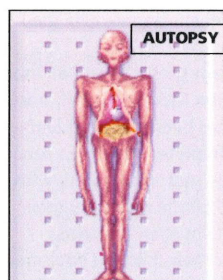
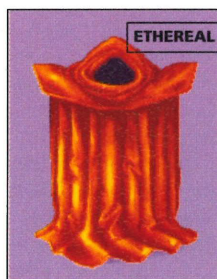
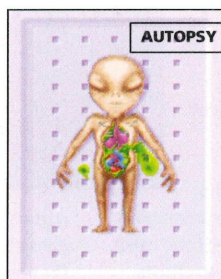
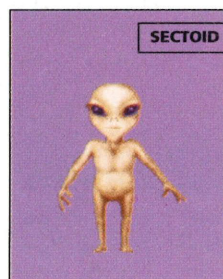
In time UFO's difficulty climbs to additively frustrating levels and the addition of the awesome firepower and heavy weapons things can get more than a little destructive. This is great for the xenophobic tendencies that grow as your men get vaporised time after time.

**Once the Alien** ores have been discovered your scientists work on the stuff and eventually give the manufacturers the ability to build personal armour for the increased protection of your ground troops and other items or equipment found on UFOs or aliens.

The alien ores and technologies prove essential to your ensuing battles. The rather inoffensive rifles you start with just aren't good enough. No fear, better ships become available along with powerful light and heavy weaponry ranging from laser pistols and carbines up to tanks, rocket launchers.

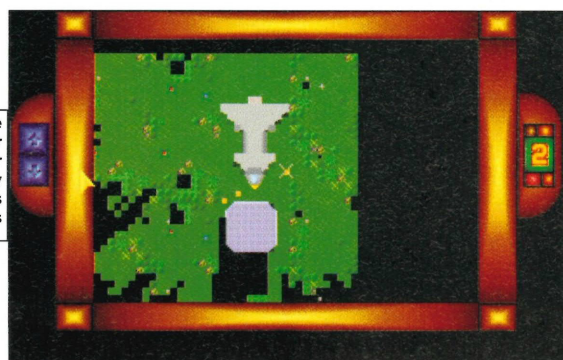
Your troops, along with all vital personnel have to be hired from your

**Once the aliens bodies are recovered from crash sites, the lab boys get stuck in with their scalpels. Grim.**



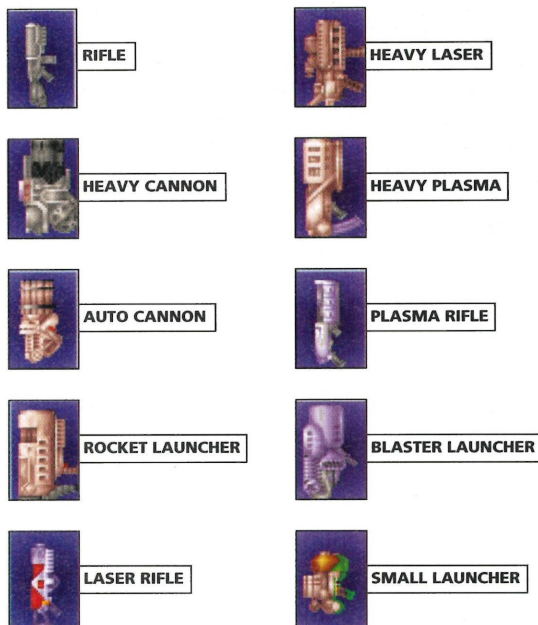
UFO's brilliant multi-layered scenarios add to the tense atmosphere created by alien hunting

The battlescape map aids your men in their seeking of any aliens, buildings and UFOs



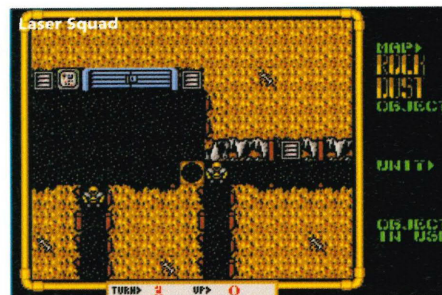


The choice of weapons grows as the game progresses, from harmless to Doom-esque



## déjà-vu

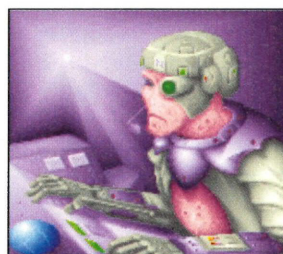
**L**aser Squad the original turn based action/strategy game looks graphically limited but the game's charm and playability still shine. Guide your laser squad around outdoor environments and infiltrate occupied buildings to take out evil blokes and robots. This being Mythos Game's first venture into turn based games, it can look a little craggy but the game engine and turn calculations are superb. Another future/turn based game is the excellent **Space Crusade** from Gremlin based on the hugely popular board game. Same idea, command your space marines to move about alien territories and ships using turns and action points. The weapons are good and the clear concise 3D layout makes gameplay simple and easy to follow. A first class conversion of the difficult subject of board games.



One of the many glorious pictures from the UFOpaedia, this is the crash site drop ship for your men



The UFOpaedia later gives you info on all sorts of bizarre information, like these delightful alien experiments on cows



base's menu screen. Rookies won't set you back much and are the essential foundation for what can grow into a sizeable army.

These grunts begin with no experience and only average aiming and shooting ability. But with time and the increasing number of missions going under their belts, all your men's attributes like aiming weapons, time units to improve turn length and other personal attributes improve.

All the information gathered in the missions and laboratories is stored in a

data bank called the UFOpaedia. Very similar to the Civilisation encyclopedia in that a simple click of the button brings up a menu with information and pictures on any subject – alien culture, disposition and even autopsy details.

The info is detailed, informative and amusing in places and the artwork is amazingly colourful and in the most part very original when you consider the number of extra-terrestrial games there are around. Huge, invigorating, tense and offering weeks of gaming into the early hours.

## appraisal

**T**he detail in UFO is very indepth and well researched which all comes together beautifully with the addition of the outstanding graphics. The time based strategy isn't going to be everybody's cup of tea but if you're an action addict don't be put off by the gameplay which is so addictive and rewarding that it all blends into a seamless gaming experience. The lack of control of the combat sequences is disappointing at times because you can't interact and have a personal effect on the outcome on the battle. This really is only a niggle and things get better as your men progress in experience and rank promotion. The 120 page manual makes for a good read and doesn't require you to wade through before you can play. The control icons are straightforward and using your common sense will normally get you up and running, eliminating aliens within a short time. The futuristic feel is here along with the sense of urgency to

defend your planet to avoid alien domination or the lack of sufficient funding, which means you won't be able to buy all those tasty weapons. The alien threat increases and the different races pose not just a physical threat but some of the aliens have psionic powers too. Imagine your distress when moving about the desert in Africa and one of your men turns and fires on the others. UFO is huge and not something you'll be able to complete in weeks never mind hours like some recent releases. Good value for money, professionally produced and well worth the effort as far as gameplay goes. A rewarding and enjoyable experience, I'll be back for a lot more.

PETE HAWLEY

## second opinion

**O**nly occasionally does a futuristic fantasy come along that really grabs your imagination and demands that you leave reality for a good few weeks. Our games cupboard is full to the brim with

space age games which borrow heavily from one another and consequently lack their very own individual fingerprint. UFO borrows heavily from various alien invasion yarns. Predator, Aliens, even Invasion of the Daleks rely on similar ideas about the mass alien invasion of Earth. But UFO is so comprehensive, so detailed and so darn definitive, it doesn't matter a jot that it's not original. Just imagine many of the best science fictions inventions being lumped together in one adventure. Humans being equipped with so many plasma blaster/phaser/laser-style high-tech equipment that you'd think that the poor UFOs wouldn't even stand a chance. But in fact the fertile breeds of foreign hosts are just as detailed and equally as intimidating. This could well be the last word in alien space games, but it will more probably be the first and may well spawn a new genre of strategy games in the future.

DAVID LONGWORTH

PCA SCORE **90%**

## data bank

CONVENTIONAL MEMORY	560
MINIMUM MEMORY	2MB
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS	386 SX
OPTIMUM	486
HARD DISK SPACE	10MB
GRAPHICS	VGA
SOUND CARDS	All major sound cards
CONTROLS	Mouse



## RAMPART

What at first appears to be a rather boring strategy game soon develops into a fast action arcade game and it's excellent as a multi-player. No guided missiles, no machine guns, just a castle, some ships and a few grunts to stand in the way of cannon balls. Rampart is brilliantly simple and incredibly addictive.

The first task is to select the location for your home castle, a wall is built around it for protection against enemy cannon balls and invading soldiers. Within these walls you place your allotted amount of cannons, placed in such a way that they can defend you from the ships at sea. There are different types of cannon to attack the three enemy ship types. You can either place your cannons within the castle walls or tap the right mouse button to forfeit some of them for a super gun that fires incendiary balls. You also have a political weapon up your



medieval sleeve. A propaganda balloon is available for your selection to float over enemy ships and castles and drop leaflets spreading the word about how smashing your kingdom is and lowering the moral of the enemy.

The castle building and planning stage is two dimensional and easy to use and once the battle starts the view switches to three dimensions. When battle commences it's just a matter of pointing your target at the bad guys using the mouse and clicking the left button to open your barrage of cannonballs. After the end of each battle your castle usually lies in disrepair. In Tetris style pieces, the wall has to be rebuilt in an allotted time or you don't progress to the next level. Rampart is cheap and addictive especially when you can play against two friends or the computer.

**Hit Squad £12.99**

★★★★☆

## WINTER CHALLENGE

Strap on those skis, wax your bobsled's runners down and prepare for another bout of influenza. Winter Challenge



consists of eight different events, including downhill, cross country and slalom skiing, bobsleigh and the luge, ski jump, speed skating and the biathlon.

Essentially, this is typical sports sim fare. A multi-player option is available, along with computer opposition that has variable skill levels, which is a nice touch. This evokes a competitive atmosphere and increases the playability of the game no end.

The disciplines themselves are well thought out and presented in a polished manner. The skiing sections make good use of perspective – as you hit the large bumps on the slope you genuinely fly. All the events are depicted in 'camera behind' 3D style, and quite effective they are too.

Some sections do seem to be extraordinarily difficult and it is practically impossible to register a decent time in the biathlon. The bobsleigh is also extremely hard to master. Rather than detracting from the game, this just adds to the long term appeal, especially when you can crank up the skill levels of the computer opponents.

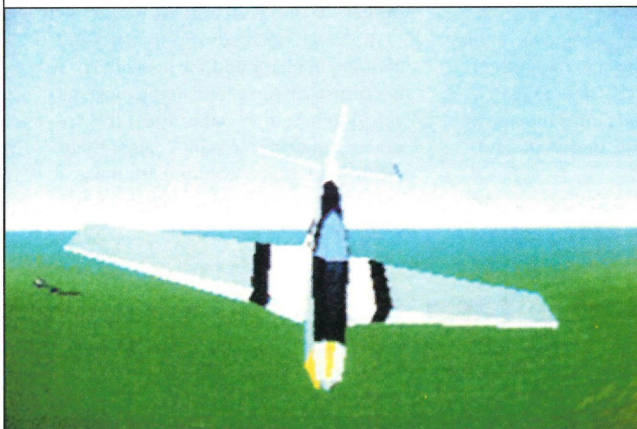
Winter Challenge is a well written program, and whilst it sticks to a fairly standard formula and takes no risks, it is still highly addictive, especially when played with friends. As a budget release, this is very good value for money indeed.

**Hit Squad £12.99**

★★★★☆

## THE HEROES OF THE 357<sup>TH</sup>

Wish you had a pound for every flight simulator on the PC? The aircraft change and the time scapes but basically they are the same, especially older sims that didn't have monster 486 DX chips to satisfy. Heroes is a little different in that the squadron you are assigned to in the game played an active part in World War 2. The 357th were based in Britain in 1942 and aided the R.A.F. in the defeat



of Goerring's Luftwaffe.

The missions in Heroes are varied and don't just involve dogfighting and bomber escort like most in the genre. Strafing runs to eliminate ground targets using your guns, rockets or bombs are a welcome break from aerial combat and bombing targets from high altitude. Chasing V1 buzz bombs proved incredibly difficult but rewarding as they crash to the ground before running out of fuel over friendly territory.

All the mission types cross-over one another which adds to the realism of flying a P51 over European occupied territory, while dealing with the Luftwaffe scourge. Strafing runs on enemy tanks and vehicles have to be maintained before they reach their destination and keep an ear out on the radio for any incoming messages warning of any Buzz Bomb sightings.

Obviously looking a tad old now but Heroes is still a good sim, especially as it's not too processor hungry. The



## BUDGET GAMES

planes move well and very fluidly, as do the ground objects. Compared to newer flights of fantasy, heroes can look a little bleak at times but it means fast action is guaranteed as there aren't masses of objects being shifted about. The addition of a wingman is a good touch and directing his attacks while protecting yourself makes things more than hectic at times.

At a budget price Heroes should be checked out. If you're a fan of prop planes and not a super sonic addict, the manuals reference to the US saving a ruined RAF is to be read with gritted teeth as visions of John Wayne saving the world spring to mind. But that small anomaly aside, as a game it still stands up well in a well and truly flooded flight market.

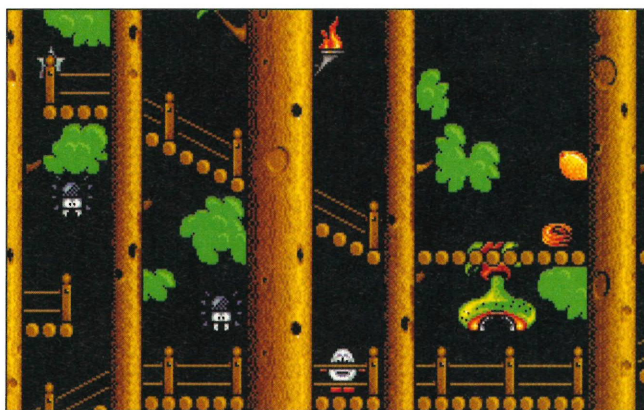
**Hit Squad £12.99**

★★★☆☆

### FANTASTIC DIZZY

Codemasters have sold over 14,000 Dizzy and Daisy's Eggcellent Adventure games on the PC already and literally millions on other formats. Their latest platform puzzler Fantastic Dizzy is sure to add to this extraordinary success they are having.

What has made the simplistic, wallet-friendly games so popular is the childlike imagination and genius innovation they pack into seemingly worn out genres. Dizzy is a straight conversion from the Sega game, so you might think playing an egg prancing around platforms in Yolkfolk's tree house village, trying to revoke the evil Wizard Zak's spell and rescue damsel in distress Daisy is



more suited to that younger Mega Drive audience. The game is actually aimed at 8-12 year olds, but attracts more 20 somethings than would care to admit it.

Okay, so it's a platformer, an alien life form that PC gamers avoid like salmonella. But it's one of the best you will find on the PC, with quite a challenging difficulty level and what seems like miles of platforms, peppered with 250 stars to collect.

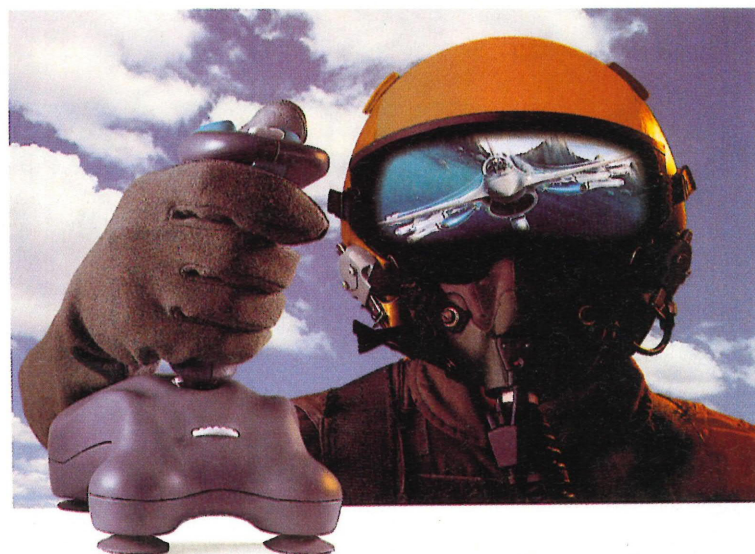
Dizzy is a loveable character, an egg on legs who looks quite nervous and jittery as he gets tossed like a pancake into the fire. He picks up objects to help his progress, like that other cutesy platformer, Puggsy, and has to lay them down in strategic places. Nothing could be simpler.

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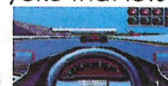
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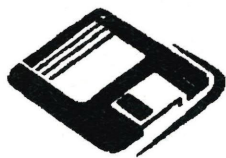
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# On the cutting edge



Like Jurassic Park,  
**The virtual world in the film**  
 Computer Aided  
**The Lawnmower Man made**  
 Design has had a powerful  
**headlines. The actors were**  
 influence on movies. Does it  
**hardly mentioned. We set**  
 spell the advent of a  
**things right with the game**  
 movie/computer merger?

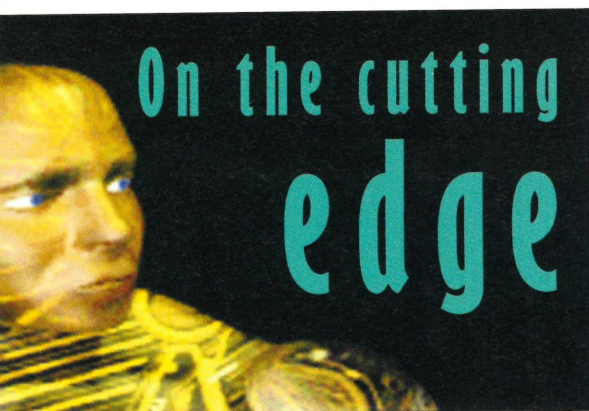
Stephen King's story of the Lawnmower Man was inspired by the science-fiction of Virtual Reality, then the movie coincided quite neatly with the commercial fact of VR. A precarious bridge has been built over the gulf between movies and games and it has fallen to design team SCI (Sales Curve Interactive) to transfer the spectacular CAD movie graphics into the world of computer games. It's been a graphical challenge beyond comparison in the field of game design.

Project leader and producer, Fergus McNeill had navigated the SCI team through turbulent waters, but with this project he came in sight of land. The Lawnmower Man seemed the perfect vehicle for this new medium, but was this a blessing in disguise?

As Fergus points out: 'Expectations were high... we knew that! This project was going to be held up to close scrutiny and viewed as an important benchmark in the interactive movie field. We felt we had a lot of responsibility to show what could be done.'

Indeed, if the so-called interactive movies that were showcased at this year's Winter ▶





► Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas are anything to go by, interactive movies on CD-Rom stand a very strong chance of being both ridiculed and stigmatised even before getting off the ground.

Fergus continues: 'We were amazed at how useless those digitized movie games were. We just went with our instinct in game design and were content with the way the mediums of game design and the movie seemed to gel.'

'But it is more than misinterpretation of the medium that is proving an obstacle in the progress of interactive movies. The outlandish Visual Reality helmets and this 'weird trip' movie provide enough damning material for the chattering classes to consider the whole deal risky and untrustworthy.'

The tabloid scaremongers who gave us 'Plastic Kettles Cause Cancer' duly fanned the flames and somewhere in the heat of it all computer games in general were branded as

responsible for a number of acts of crime.

So surely a combination of the visual impact of the movie and its interactivity in the home environment will have 'disturbed from Dorking' reaching for a biro? Surely a movie in which a simple-minded odd job man enters into a virtual world and becomes a God is asking for trouble?

Fergus laughs: 'We did wonder what the reaction would be to this game. The subtitle 'God made him simple, science made him a God' is certainly open to misinterpretation. But everyone would have to admit, the concept is certainly intriguing.'

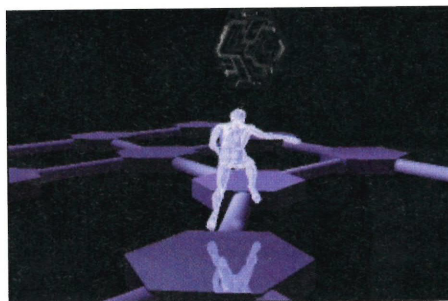
In a few short years, game design has

accelerated to a stage where it is possible, in the right hands, to present a gamesplayer with a movie which they are involved in. Fergus recalls technological advances during the course of the Lawnmower Man production: 'We were constantly aware of updated equipment and software, to a point where it felt like a race of technological achievement. The speed of game design evolution means that if you're not there, at the cutting edge, especially with something as prominent as this project, you may as well not bother.'

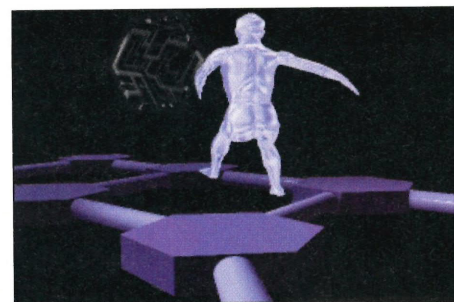
'The investment in updating equipment is quite frightening, not to mention 1,000's of man hours in production and fine tuning. To game designers, CD-Rom and the expectations of interactive movies simply means longer projects... longer hours, more pressure.'

'CD technology in the game's field is more for consumer recognisability. It's not the great

**Left:** Dr Angelo was designed using the same technique employed in T2 **Below:** Cyberjoke was supplied by Angel Design. SCI had the rare privilege of having the movie's star always on hand 24 hours a day, seven days a week



*A leap into darkness as Angelo confronts the evil, invisible Dr Timms in a bizarre game of dare*



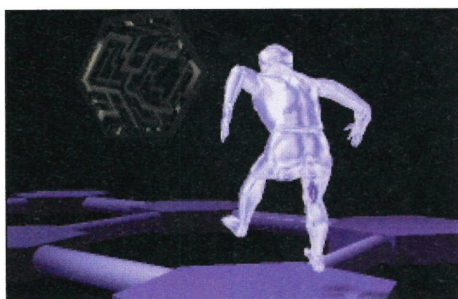
*Take the wrong path and perish. Meanwhile the voices of the stricken youngsters increase the sense of urgency*



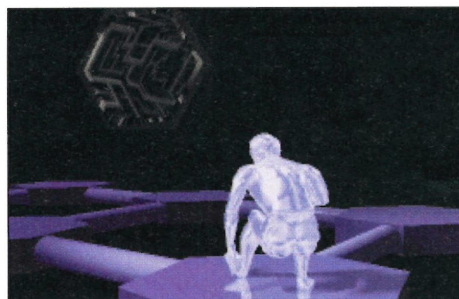
**'EXPECTATIONS WERE HIGH... WE KNEW THAT! THIS PROJECT WAS GOING TO BE HELD UP TO CLOSE SCRUTINY AND VIEWED AS AN IMPORTANT BENCHMARK IN THE INTERACTIVE MOVIE FIELD'**



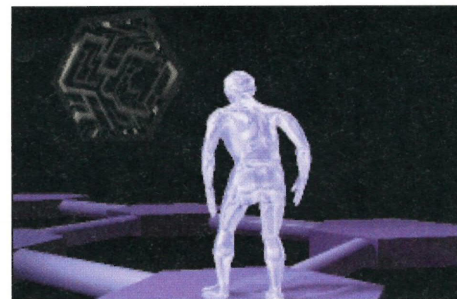




It is time to go into the void. Guide Angelo safely to the other side of the vortex bridge



Each time you move one tile, the invisible Dr. Timms also moves one tile



Creepy and sinister, the invisible Dr. Timms laughs as he gets closer to Angelo

## See the light...

**t**he SCI Storm offices are, to say the least, dark. With blacked-out windows, the only light source is from various monitor screens and this is partly obscured by pasty-faced graphic artists. As Fergus describes the process of graphic production in The Lawnmower Man project, we realise technology has trotted on a few yards from 'Horace and the Spiders'.

'We approached the preliminary stages of the project as a movie with initial storyboard meetings. Here we discussed different styles of gameplay, cerebral puzzle-solving and physical action, and how to incorporate them into the movie plot. Subsequent meetings enabled us to firm up the storyboard and two separate prongs of production, the graphical presentation and the gameplay design.'

The game presents a puzzle followed by a roller-coaster 'Cyberboogie' which cuts a sway through a labyrinth of corridors at breakneck speed. Further on a sinister battle of chess with the evil and invisible Dr Timms ensues. Finishing off this action is a pulse-racing run from the blades of 'Big Red' Cyberjobs' lawnmower alter ego.

'Never has a game produced so many emotions and stimulated so many senses,' says Fergus: 'We produced models using 3D studio models and built complete sets overlaid with actual models animated in the set and experimented with the different camera angles and began the editing process.'

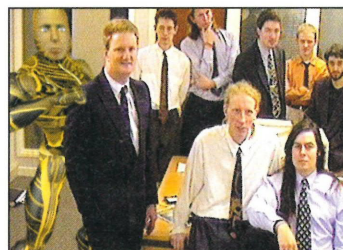
'It's pretty amazing the difference that even a split second can make to a scene. From wire-frame or polygon preview, if we are relatively happy with camera angles we 'test-render' a number of frames from a sequence every 20 frames. Then we render it, up setting everything, lighting and camera and finally we leave it to render overnight or if possible over the whole of the weekend.'

advance in technology that it has been painted as. So what it adds up to is considerably more work for less return. CD has done game design no favours whatsoever, but in the name of technology it's our responsibility to make it work to its full potential.'

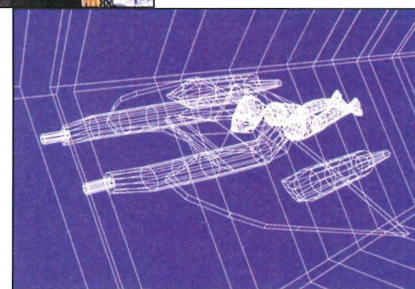
The CAD design in The Lawnmower Man was not so much a special effects diversion like Terminator 2. 'In many respects, this was a catalyst in movie making,' adds Fergus. Hollywood had tampered with various special effects aside from the traditional model animation. But the visual impact of the graphics in The Lawnmower Man heightened the profile of CAD in movie making.

Jurassic Park, the film, was a perfect example of the capabilities this new technology could achieve. It also highlighted VR and drew a definable line between movies and interactive entertainment. There are some grey areas though and by the looks of some of the so-called interactive movies that are being produced in the States, some people have got the wrong end of the stick.'

The 1994 CES in Las Vegas showcased the latest range of digitized film featuring horrendous acting, scripting, a paper-thin plot and barely any interactivity. Fergus gives us his opinion: 'This can only serve to push movies and interactive entertainment apart again. This



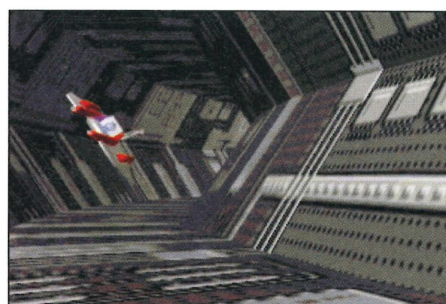
**Left:** The Sales Curve Interactive Team are embroiled in one of the most important projects in the history of game design. Its success relies on a convincing portrayal of the spectacular movie, without sacrificing gameplay **Below:** Using techniques similar to those employed in Jurassic Park, graphics begin life as wire framed meshes



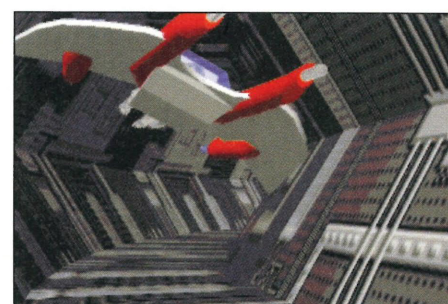
is quite clearly not the path to pursue. I'm sure we'll get the profile to show that interactive movies are the future.

'The merging of mediums is inevitable, but it will have to be approached in just the right way. It's not just misrepresentation and scaremongering which threatens to put the dampers on interactive movies, the technology itself will be the making or breaking of the medium. Until recently Hollywood was wary of the game industry. Now it's intrigued.'

However, the sort of attention that Hollywood has courted has made some game designers criticise the merging of movies and ►

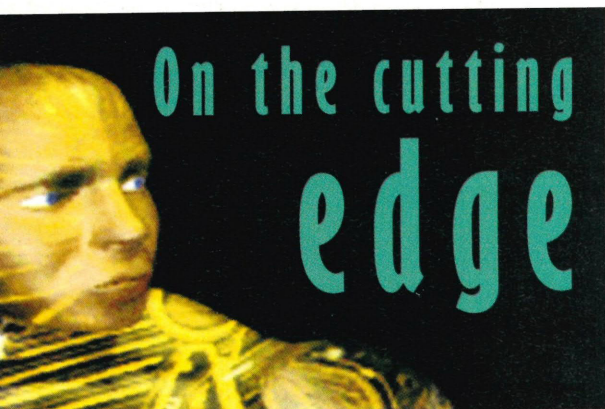


Movie or game? The Lawnmower Man is tailor made for interactive movies



SCI approaches the project as game designers first and then as directors second.





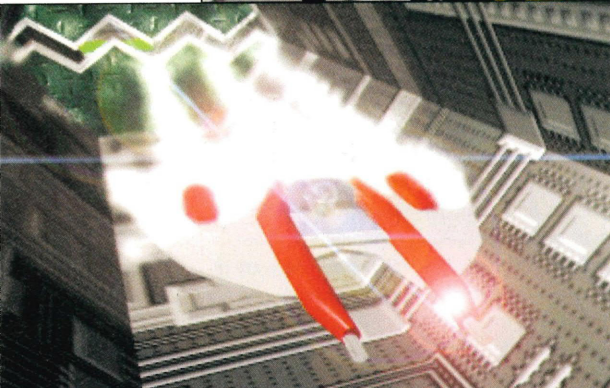
## 'BY THE LOOKS OF SOME OF THE SO-CALLED INTERACTIVE MOVIES THAT ARE BEING PRODUCED IN THE STATES, SOME PEOPLE HAVE GOT THE WRONG END OF THE STICK'

► game design. In particular the massive licence fees which get paid to movie companies often at the expense of the game design team.

But thanks to the suitability of The Lawnmower Man, SCI is perhaps the leading light in the UK in this field. Its debut project on CD-Rom has inspired the press to gush such tributes as: 'The nearest thing anyone's seen to an interactive movie'.

But the subject matter of most movies is

**Above:** Cyberjobe, in reality a simple minded grass cutter. But in the virtual world, a God **Below top:** You can always rely on killer bees to put a sting in the pace **Below bottom:** A narrow escape as massive doors slam down



inappropriate for computer gaming and whether such graphical attention could be lavished on more conventional movie themes is dubious. The Lawnmower Man on the other hand was tailor made with a Savill Row tag. So not surprisingly, SCI have already sealed the licence to the sequel, The Lawnmower Man 2.

'By the look of what has been produced in the States, there are a number of different interpretations of the term interactive movie,' says Fergus. 'With The Lawnmower Man we were able to reproduce the visual impact of the virtual world in the movie, simply because it was produced by computer-aided design... a process of reversal in production techniques.

Live film footage with actors acting out a plot only goes to show that film directors make terrible game designers.'

So can we say that game designers make lousy movie directors? Fergus laughs: 'Despite the fact that we're dealing with interactive movies we've stayed with what we know. The basic premise of game design remains the same, it's just that this technology enables us to emulate what was achieved in the movie. The film making techniques, editing and different camera angles have been learnt by us while mastering the technology... plus the fact that we're all latent directors at heart.'

JASON SPILLER



### Music, lights...

'Special effects play an important part as in the movie, and we employed similar techniques,' says Fergus. The lasers shooting out of the doors during Cyberboogie were achieved with a combination of lights after the rendering stage. We illuminated the section and hand drew the sparks to fall just the way we wanted them to, enhanced by image processing techniques upping the contrast or introducing motion blur. After rendering is completed, there's an opportunity to fine-tune the graphics and enhance highlights before editing completed sections of film and recutting to achieve the exact pace and flow that is required.'

The main character and the adversary in the game, Jobe, is as powerful an image in the game as in the movie. Fergus describes the amazing bonus of having a computer-designed movie star: 'Angel Design who produced the graphics in the movie gave us the Jobe model to use in the game. It was quite an advantage having the star at our disposal 24 hours a day, seven days a week.'

The stunning visual effects are complemented by haunting sonic experiences. Fergus: 'Steve Hillage did the soundtrack. He's written for Simple Minds and his movie soundtracks, URG and L'enfant Lion are really incredible. The similarities with making movies and this project are uncanny. Pulling all these elements together, the music, sound and editing, It's such an intensely exciting process... we're determined to make people sit up and take notice.'



Cyber-Boogie! A roller-coaster ride with arrows being the only reference to which direction to take



A maze of passageways and a split-second decision will dictate the next part of the mission



This section demonstrates the atmosphere, and different camera angles and split-second editing keep the pace



# we're off to see the WIZARD

From ghoulies and ghosties and long-  
leggety beasties  
And things that go bump in the night,  
Good Lord, deliver us!

ANONYMOUS CORNISH PRAYER



Ever wondered how a game is created? Where the original idea came from? Who was involved in its development? Now all these questions can be answered as PC Action along with Psygnosis offer you the chance to win an all expenses paid day trip to see just how a game is produced. You'll even get the chance to sing that world famous song 'We're off to see the Wizard the wonderful Wizard...'. Why you might ask? Well the lucky winner will have an all expenses paid day trip to Leeds, Yorkshire, to visit Tag and his team, the creators of Wizard, the latest huge role-playing game. The day will be spent RPGing, looking at the team's latest creations and asking as many probing questions as you see fit.

This could be about the Wizard's first person perspective, the smooth scrolling game engine or even the 40 dungeons which hold 500 monsters to battle against as you search for the four important artifacts. Or on the other hand you might just want to quiz the team on developments for the future.

If however you don't win this amazing day out there are also five runners-up Psygnosis game prizes to get your hands on. Choose from Dungeon Master, Chaos Strikes Back, Lemmings or Lemmings 2, Wizard and Innocent Until Caught (on floppy disk only). Each winner will also receive an Innocent Until Caught black bomber jacket.



All you have to do is name the four characters who went along the yellow brick road to visit the Wizard of Oz and what they asked of him once they arrived in the Emerald City?

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Please tick the box for the game you require:

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Send this entry form to: Wizard Competition, PC Action, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield, SK10 4NP. All entries should reach us no later than April 17th 1994. Employees of Europress may not enter this competition. Neither can their families. The editor's decision is final and no correspondence can be entered into.





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## Central Intelligence



*Right: You begin the game by choosing a location on the map which can be zoomed into*

*Below: Make your mark in the world of espionage*

*Below Left: Pick an agent and determine his cause of action*

The secret service holds an element of suspicion and intrigue for us all, what with rumours of attempted overthrow of governments and undermining the influence of certain dictators over their people. Fidel Castro's best mates are the best example in the world, you know who we mean.

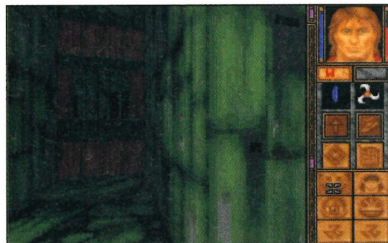
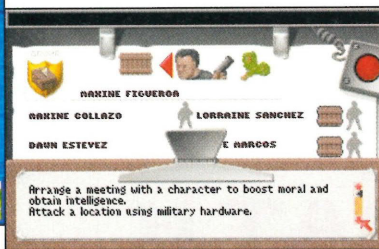
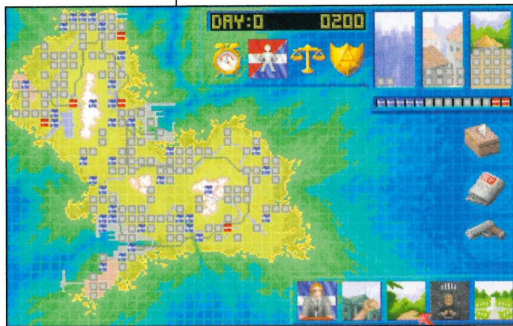
**Central Intelligence** from Really Interesting Software puts you in the hot seat as director of operations. On the allotted island you must use your tactical and strategic mind to plant various agents at specific points on the map to gather intelligence on the opposition party and its leaders. Each of your agents specialise in certain fields from secret operators to trained killers.

During your agents special ops, full motion video interludes the strategy and shows the agent's actions and surroundings. The aim is to outsmart the opposition party and influence the populace over to your side. Useful information can be gathered to aid you in your mission from an array of different members of society, students, rebels, and officials such as mayors, town chiefs etc.

People are naturally nosy, and the appeal of spying on others in an attempt to gain the control of someone else's land is in itself good grounding for a strategy game. It

looks very detailed and involving and is having the final touches applied now.

*Central Intelligence, CD-Rom only, is to be swept from the Ocean shores in May.*



*Right: Shadow Caster - a recommended role-play game with a definite action slant is about to get the full CD-Rom treatment*

*Below: UBIsoft once again embark into the compilation field. Indications of a good package are of the very promising variety*

time. Four extremely playable games with added CD quality whistles and bells when it comes to music, sound FX, intro sequences, not to mention the needlessness of hard disk space, certainly inspire players still pondering the validity of that CD drive to take the plunge.

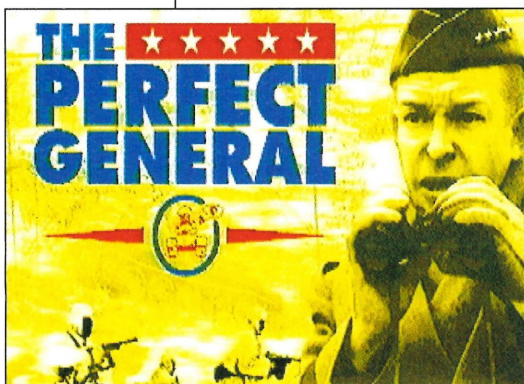
## Compilation crescendo

Now that the benefits of CD-Rom and its mass storage space are being utilised proficiently, if not wildly successfully, a weird and wacky assortment of compilation packages are merrily winging their way to the PC Action desks.

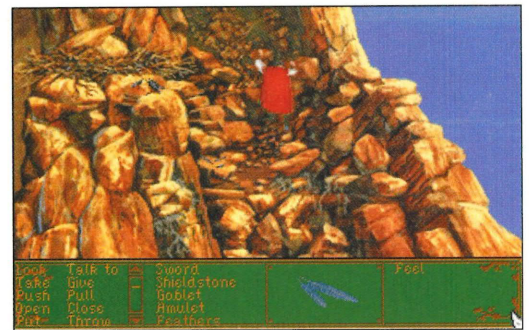
Departing from the travesty of the Interplay 10th Anniversary compilation (March

issue) UBIsoft have adopted a 'new look' approach and their latest two collections promise - and indeed look certain to deliver - great things.

**Quest & Fun** comprises King's Quest V, the indomitable Leisure Suit Larry 5 and Red Baron, while the other bargain package is referred to as **Battles of Time**. The Perfect General, Mega Lo Mania, Battle Isle and First Samurai brush shoulders here, giving us gamers some cause to wonder that perhaps that almost perfect strategy games compilation may be only a 'next month review' away...



is the complete entertainment package with music, digitized sound and action still a CD away? Find out with the fullest up to the minute review guide around...



## DRAGONSPHERE p74

'The grim reaper is a frequent visitor, but death isn't the handicap it used to be'

## CRITICAL PATH p70

It's not so much 'interactive' games flourishing, but doggedly persisting

## QUANTAM GATE p70

Hammy acting, sequences that enforce you to watch rather than do. Is this a game?

## WINTER OLYMPICS p72

Joystick waggling returns centre stage as the timely sim takes the downward slopes

## DRAGONSPHERE p74

Cue action. Cue adventure. Cue dramatics and a darned good fantasy exploration

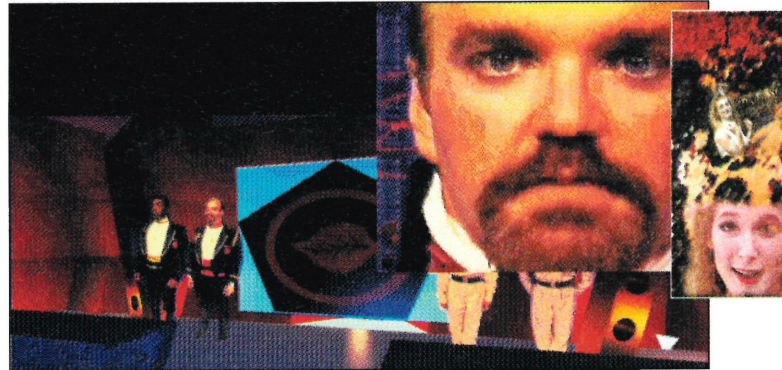


# QUANTUM GATE

PUBLISHER	MediaVision
CONTACT	081 563 2222
TEAM	Hyperbole Studios
PRICE	£49.95
RELEASE DATE	Out Now

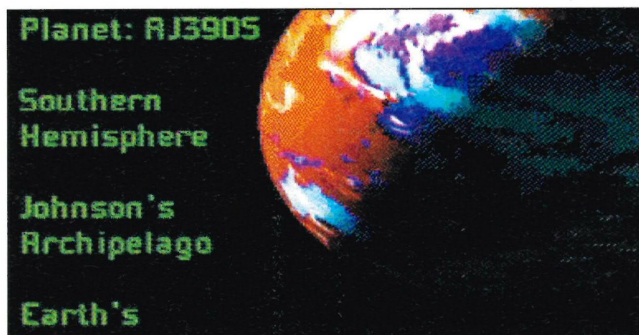
*'The sun, the moon and the stars would have disappeared long ago, had they happened to be within reach of predatory human hands'*

HAVELOCK ELLIS (BRITISH PSYCHOLOGIST) 1859-1939



Your first briefing session concerning the Eden project – corny dialogue enters stage left

*Media Vision present a virtual cinema experience which is a giant leap forward in interactive story telling. We shall see...*



The planet where the valuable Iridium reserves are present – but getting hold of them is no piece of cake

**W**hen the phrase 'interactive movie' is mentioned in the same sentence as CD-Rom, dire things are usually afoot. Cynical, maybe, but the image of a game with skin deep beauty and no real innards is almost immediately conjured up.

Such bias is really not on, but there are few CD-Rom products of quality that live up to their claims of 'virtual theatre' and of 'total interactivity'.

Plotwise, Quantum Gate

simultaneously manages to be mildly interesting and more than somewhat tacky. The basic scenario involves you, a certain Drew Griffin, as a newly enlisted 'corporate soldier'.

Set in the year 2057, environmental armageddon is just about to occur on earth, and the life expectancy of the world is projected to be only about five years at the most.

You are charged with the task of unravelling the workings of the Eden

## 'Slow paced, too linear and a distinctly unimpre

## CRITICAL PATH

PUBLISHER	SMI
CONTACT	081 563 2222
TEAM	Media Vision
PRICE	£49.95
RELEASE DATE	Out now

*'A critic is a bundle of biases held loosely together by a sense of taste'*

WHITNEY BALLIET 1926

*The path to ruin is paved with gold, so they say. They also say all that glitters is not gold – the crazy paving of this game for instance*

**I**nteractive movies are no good. We've said it before and we'll keep on saying it until they improve. You don't believe us? You want to know why? Then read on.

With all the ingredients of a clichéd action movie – helicopters, vats of molten metal, even factory catwalks – Critical Path is a real looker. It has a convoluted movie plot and is filmed with near dazzling brilliance. So it comes as a crushing disappointment to discover that there is no real game deep below this elegant veneer.

The 13 or so puzzles range from the

ludicrously simple to the plain silly. Twice you have to tell Sigourney Weaver lookalike Kat which direction to take when you know no more than her and only have the benefit of a limited view from a camera nestled in her helmet. And that's supposed to be a puzzle.

The biggest puzzle though is working out why Media Vision even bothered. Why do they film cinematically with obvious attention to the finer points of atmospheric detail only to surround it with an irritating control panel view? Why do they write a fine cliché of a script, set after the obligatory nuclear



Minh calls his human toys blood oranges but they're not sweet

One of the codes sets off the electric chair which torches this poor stranger

holocaust and then spoil it by talking about 'human intelligence' programming?

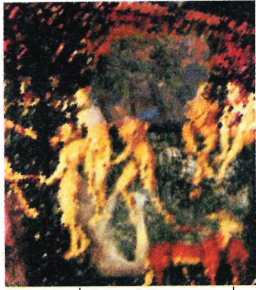
Why do they make near decent actress Eileen Weisinger sweat it out on the small screen of windows digitised footage when the challenges she faces would look far better on the big screen? 'What's the use?' asks Kat. 'It's just a

game, a sick game, with some maniac pulling the strings.' The maniac is in fact the evil lunatic General Minh, who has scrawled his psychotic ravings in a notebook and left it lying around in the very control room you happen to be in.

The notebook contains codes which trigger various explosive devices around the building. Deciphering these is fairly straightforward, but how many of you

## 'We gamers are not that





One of the game's many weird cameos – Quantum Gate certainly has its surreal moments

Initiative, a plan to reverse the death of the planet. The key to this operation is a mineral, Iridium Oxide, which can only be found on the planet AJ3905, in an alternate reality which is only accessible by utilising the Quantum Gate.

Of course, it isn't just a simple matter of taking a trip to the said planet and picking some up from the local Tesco's – a web of intrigue and backstabbing surrounds the corporation's affairs, as well as some rather nasty green alien insectoids that happen to call AJ3905 home. Needless to say, the corporation's presence is not welcome.

Initially, the rather slow and jerky frame update is somewhat off putting, and this was running on a decent 486 with a top of the range double speed

Toshiba CD drive. Top this off with the small screen size, the hallmark of a windows game and the graphics, even though they are detailed SVGA, all do not particularly impress. Eight Mb of RAM is also required to play, and running this program on anything less than a top spec machine is infeasible.

As you start to explore, the user interface turns out to be very simple and intuitive. Moving the pointer over something you can interact with causes it to change into a symbol – an eye to examine something, a mouth to talk to someone and so on. However, the sense of control is very limited.

Firstly, the number of locations are few and to say that Quantum Gate is

linear would be a huge understatement. Set pieces of video footage can go on for up to 10 minutes and the acting in the game is beyond the realms of the hammy.

The action sequences, where you are called upon to take up arms in a VR simulation of combat against the green bugs from hell, fails to add any substance. But on the plus side some of the visual sequences are well executed.

Yes, this release sticks to the unwritten recipe for CD-Rom games. Take very little gameplay, some fancy visuals, incredibly naff acting and the odd pinch of interactivity, bung it all in the melting pot and simmer for 15 minutes.

Artificial person? So no different to the other characters in the game then?



## data bank

### CONVENTIONAL MEMORY

Windows

### MINIMUM MEMORY

8MB

### MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

486 SX25

### OPTIMUM

486 DX33

### HARD DISK SPACE

10MB

### GRAPHICS

SVGA

### SOUND CARDS

Windows compatible (16 bit Rec)

### CONTROLS

Keyboard, Mouse

### TRANSFER RATE

150 kbs (300kbs Rec)

## appraisal

One thing that I haven't mentioned about Quantum Gate yet is its seemingly routine habit of crashing. At times the sound disappeared for no apparent reason and unless you are a good lip reader, this may prove something of a problem. Outright lock-ups also

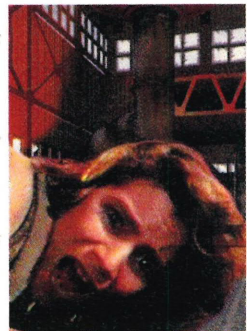
occurred, commonly in the VR combat section. For a CD-Rom game, it takes up 10 Mb of hard drive space, which seems to defeat one of the major points of owning a CD drive. Quantum Gate is slow paced, too linear and a distinctly unimpressive use of a compact disc.

DARREN ALLEN

PCA SCORE

54%

# ssive use of a compact disc'



Hit the deck! This Kat has 10 lives, or so she tells us

know the temperature paper burns at?

The other buttons on your control panel trigger conveyor belts, alarms and

the like. It's actually quite an original set-up, but at the same time leaves no room for deviation.

**There's only one way to** direct Kat safely to her rooftop escape, and, unlike the oldest pastime around, once you've done it, you'll not want to do it again. And you could probably complete the whole thing in an hour, so sparse and weedy are the puzzles.

And to top it all, the game is bugged. On one of the toughest challenges, the catwalk maze, you are Kat's eyes as she has been blinded by the molten metal you just poured over the baddies. You advise her to turn left, she takes the left

fork and only then reports 'turning

now, what next?' And when you enter a code to detonate an explosive, the time delay is explained by their being low batteries in the control room.

Special effects are redeeming features. We cheered when the guy got the electric chair treatment in the torture room and enjoyed pouring molten lava over baddies in orange overalls. And if big budget special effects can really make a film, then maybe this game will also work. But on the other hand I think maybe not. We gamers are not that all that gullible, now are we?

You get the feeling General Minh is making the moves in this game



Kat grabs hold of the crane in a made-for-movie shot



## data bank

### CONVENTIONAL MEMORY

Windows

### MINIMUM MEMORY

4Mb

### MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

386-33Mhz (Windows 3.1)

### OPTIMUM

486-25Mhz

### HARD DISK SPACE

6.3MB

### GRAPHICS

Super VGA, 256 Colour Mode

### SOUND CARDS

8 Bit Windows Compat. Soundcard

### CONTROLS

Mouse

### TRANSFER RATE

150kbs (300kbs Rec)

## appraisal

This is appalling value for money. The puzzles present no great challenge, nor are there very many of them. It's part of this alarming trend where you watch a game rather than play it and quite frankly it's not good enough. Adventurers live for the thrill of solving a

difficult puzzle and progressing to the next stage, with a visually pleasing piece of digitised footage coming as a reward for these labours. The only thrill involved in Critical Path is the passive visual thrill of a movie and that belies the whole point of an interactive adventure.

DAVID LONGWORTH

PCA SCORE

56%

# gullible'



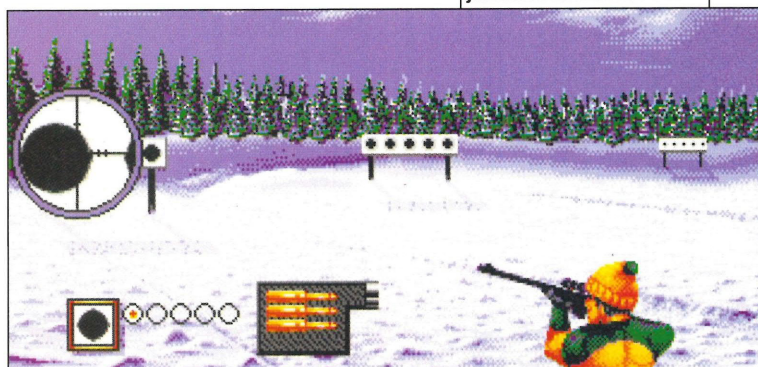
# WINTER OLYMPICS

PUBLISHER	US Gold
CONTACT	021 326 3366
TEAM	In-House
PRICE	£42.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now

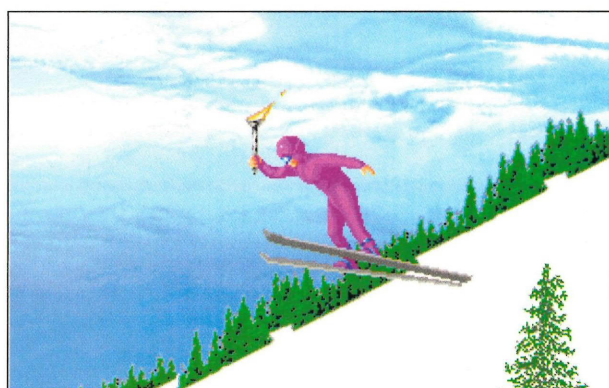
*'Games are for people who can neither read nor think'*

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW 1856-1950

Sharp shooting is expected of you in the biathlon and is no mean feat after you've just skied nine kilometres



*As sure as night follows day, the coming of the Winter Olympics heralds a computer game tie-in*



The Opening ceremony, with the traditional ski jumper carrying the Olympic flame. Falling over on landing doesn't even bear thinking about!

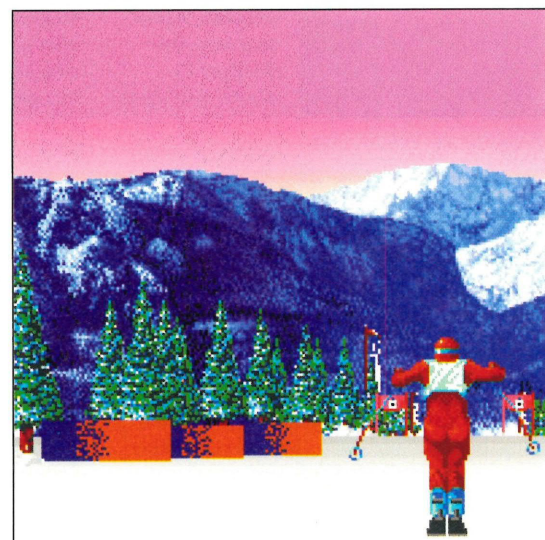
Lillehammer in Norway is the setting for the 27th Winter Olympics and it is from hither that US Gold draw the inspiration for their latest sport sim. Not exactly an original concept in the field of computer gaming, these 'Track and Field' type simulations have been around for quite some time now.

In fact, US Gold were responsible for the famous range of 'Epyx' Olympic games – Summer Games One and Two, as well as the father of this program, Winter Games.

Playability in games of this nature is derived largely from the multi-player element – in Winter Olympics up to four players can compete simultaneously. As an extra bonus on the CD, or so the theory runs, included are various full motion video sequences explaining the origins of the events, the different stadiums situated about Norway and so on.

Whether you will actually use this database really depends on how much this sort of thing interests you, but it is unlikely that many people will. It is all done in a very twee and off-putting manner, which will have most of you reaching for the escape key faster than it takes Eddie the Eagle Edwards to hit the ground in the ski-jump.

**Moving onto the** events themselves, there are five central sports, divided into 14 disciplines, although there is a certain degree of repetition, the difference between a two man and four man bobsleigh being minimal. The player(s) may elect to compete in a mini



Olympics, which involves three events, or the full version, featuring all four events plus the stamina-draining biathlon. Practice can also be selected for any of these disciplines.

**The standard of** opposition provided by the computer is tough, so before entering into the Olympics proper it is a sound idea to exercise this practice option.

What is extremely annoying is that it sends you back to the practice event menu after just one try. This just creates unnecessary disc accessing, especially where the short events such as the ski-jump are concerned. Poor program design is the cause of this.

Ranging from the impressive to the uncontrollable, the disciplines themselves are a mixed bag in terms of playability. Probably the most enjoyable section is the skiing. Participants can elect to ski either the downhill, or one of three progressively slower slalom

**'Ranging from being pretty impressive to the uncontrollable, the disciplines themselves are really a mixed bag in terms of playability'**



Hurting down the track in your bobsleigh is fun... at least for a while





Fast skiing action in the downhill event – don't get too close to those trees

00:14.55

courses. Control of your skier is simple, just being a matter of pushing left or right to slew in that direction, and forward to crouch down on the skis and gain speed.

While the skier's movement isn't exactly realistic, it is both a fun and challenging event. The frame update is fluid, and the snowy slopes are nicely depicted. Miss one gate, though, and it's disqualification time – there are no time penalties here.

Ski-jumping takes a while to get the hang of, but once you have mastered the art of keeping your skis straight as much as possible, you will be up there with the best of them. Perhaps the visuals for this event could have been made a little more exciting, but the difficulty level is certainly well pitched and highly challenging.

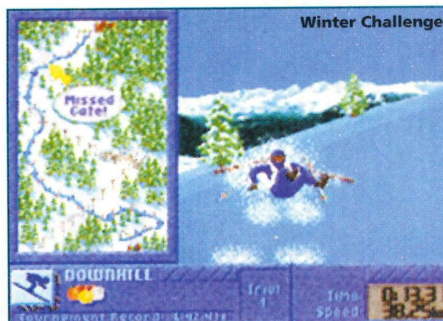
**However, the other** sub-games are not so effective. Bobsleigh certainly doesn't lack potential – the 3D graphics are quite impressive on a 486, but it is just too hard. Starting with a bout of joystick waggling (or keyboard pounding) to get your bobsleigh hurtling down the track, you are then expected to possess out of this world reflexes to be able to get to the finish in anything like a decent time.

Of course, it is surely just a matter of moving right and left at the appropriate

## déjà-vu

**W**inter Challenge, by Accolade, may be a very old game but it is the only rival to Winter Olympics. Challenge suffers from the same problem as Olympics, as regards the lack of events available for simulation and there really isn't an awful lot to differentiate between the two.

Despite its age Challenge actually has quite respectable graphic routines although it suffers from a lack of depth overall. Pushed to make a choice, Olympics has the edge, but not without a bit of jostling.



RESULTS			
09	P. MILLER	0:14:19.7	+
10	C. MARTINSON	0:14:20.2	+
11	EDDIE	0:14:21.9	+
12	C. HART	0:14:22.8	+
13	C. TAYLOR	0:14:23.7	+
14	K. SALUNYAE	0:14:25.2	+
15	T. HUGSTEDT	0:14:27.3	+
16	F. WANG LEE	0:14:28.0	+

PRESS START

times? Yes, this may be the case, but it is very difficult to tell exactly when to steer, and even if you do manage to keep your bobsleigh upright you lose a lot of speed through the bends, making this a very tough discipline to master. The luge event is practically identical.

In theory, an aid is included in that the driver will lean his head in the direction you should be steering. However, this just demotes the gameplay – you might just as well have an arrow on the screen that occasionally points left or right, which you have to follow.

But the award for biggest flop must go to the speed skating. This is a simple, unadulterated wobble, somewhat uncontrollable and apparently impossible to win at.

Visually it is also of the poorest

Trying not to end up with my face in the snow – the ski jump takes some getting used to

quality, and it is a fair bet that it was the last event programmed into the game, just before the deadline. This section succeeds only in being frustrating, as it is compulsory in the full Olympics and is just unplayable.

**Interspersing each** of these events in the full Olympics is the arduous biathlon which is a mixture of cross country skiing and rifle shooting. Again, this is a real joystick wobble for the skiing bit and a simple but effective control system is used to move the (very

## data bank

### CONVENTIONAL MEMORY

590k

### MINIMUM MEMORY

4MB

### MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

386 5x25

### OPTIMUM

486 DX33

### HARD DISK SPACE

200k for saved games

### GRAPHICS

SVGA

### SOUND CARDS

Pro Audio Spectrum, S/Blaster or 100% compat

### CONTROLS

Joystick Keyboard

### TRANSFER RATE

150 kbs/300kbs (comes on two disks – single or double)

sensitive) crosshairs over the five targets, hitting fire to shoot. Needless to say, you only have five rounds and any misses are penalised with a time penalty.

One final thought that springs to mind is the amount of grief that Olympics can give your poor joystick. Some of the events do contain a fair amount of quite punishing waggling and you get the feeling that when your mate has finished his last leg of the biathlon he will hand you back a twisted lump of plastic, with the words 'Gravis Analogue Pro' barely readable.

Okay, it's not quite this bad, but analogue joysticks aren't cheap – perhaps this is one for the rusty old digital, if you have an adapter. On the whole, this isn't a bad effort by any means, and if you enjoy sport sims this will probably not disappoint. The fact is it could have been substantially better if a little more care had been exercised.

## appraisal

**I** was not at all impressed with all the FMV Olympic history bit, and certain authentic elements of the game made me cringe, notably the usage of the official Olympic mascots, a little Norwegian boy and girl – guaranteed to have you reaching for the sick bag in seconds. Olympics certainly have both their good and bad points, but there really aren't enough good ones in this package. More events, especially if they were of similar quality to the downhill or ski-jump sections, would have been welcome, but there aren't that many winter sports in existence these days. Not one I can particularly recommend, but a passable enough effort, no less when played with two or three friends.

DARREN ALLAN

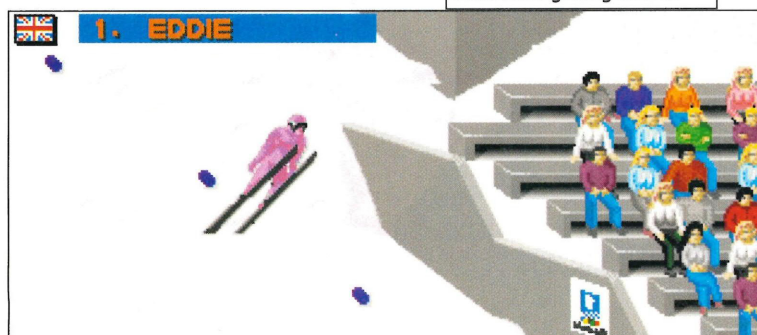
## second opinion

**I**'ve never been a fan of joystick waggling. The futility of this – plus its sad sexual connotations – was made clear when a game called Wagglomania for the Amiga came into the office recently. But that's another story. This story is interesting enough, the history of the Olympics that is, with 10,000 words of text and clips from legendary Olympic records. But this practice of padding out ordinary, indeed outdated gameplay with archive video footage, quite separate from the game itself, is pretty shameful. That's not what CDs are about. Within this game though you just can't disguise the fact that quality and original gameplay is decidedly lacking in the 5 events.

DAVID LONGWORTH

PCA SCORE

66%

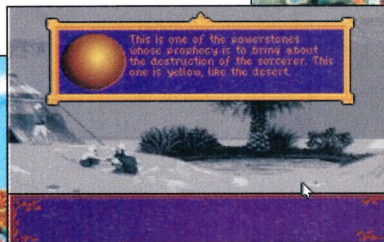
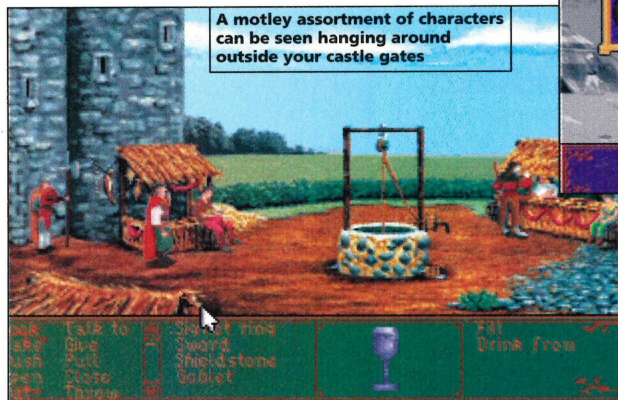




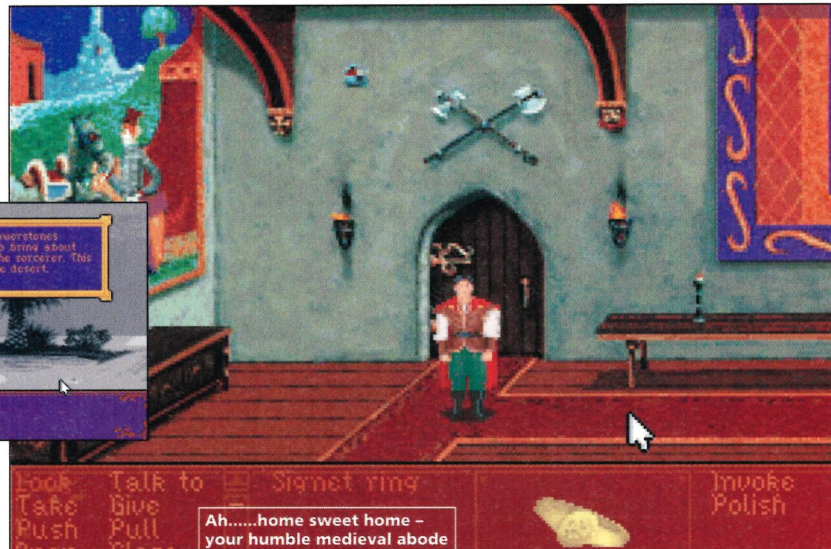
# DRAGONSPHERE

**PUBLISHER** MicroProse  
**CONTACT** 0454 326532  
**TEAM** In-House  
**PRICE** £39.99  
**RELEASE DATE** Out Now

*'Sanwe is a threat from days gone by, and there is no reason to fear him. No reason at all'*  
 CALLASH (HERO OF DRAGONSPHERE)



One of the fabled powerstones needed to defeat Sanwe



*The world of Gran Callahach is a medieval realm threatened by powerful magician. Monkey Island this ain't...*

**Do you find yourself more than a little nauseated at the thought of another rather twee and supposedly amusing graphic adventure? Well, fear not, because MicroProse's latest in a line of AGA's (animated graphic adventures) comes from the seedy side of town.**

This is hard-nosed, 'realistic' fantasy gaming. Yes, this sounds like a

contradiction, but there is none of the standard 'humour' usually present in games of this genre, save for a dry and sarcastic wit reserved for those with a habit of trying to push, pull and use everything in sight (ie. most of us).

Dragonsphere is set in a medieval world of swords and sorcery, full of solid oaken chests, heavy velvet drapes and hugely powerful sorcerers with unpronounceable names. Previous

MicroProse outings in this field include Rex Nebular, which was received with somewhat mixed feelings and Phantom of the Opera, a well produced and atmospheric game, but far too easy to finish. This is not the case with Dragonsphere - a push over it most definitely isn't.

At the beginning of the game things are looking pretty grim. An evil sorcerer and general all-round tyrant by the name of Sanwe was imprisoned by a huge magical shield some 20 years past.

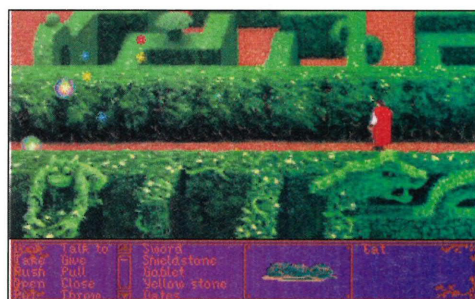
However, the Dragonsphere, a crystal-ball like device which represents the strength of this shield, is starting to crack. Inside the globe sits a dragon, which is now slowly awakening, indicating Sanwe's increasing level of magical activity.

All this, of course, is very bad news - especially for you, Callash, the hero of

the piece, as it was your father who saw to it that Sanwe was held in captivity. Vengeance in the extreme sense of the word will certainly be on Sanwe's mind when he breaks the spell and unleashes himself onto the world.

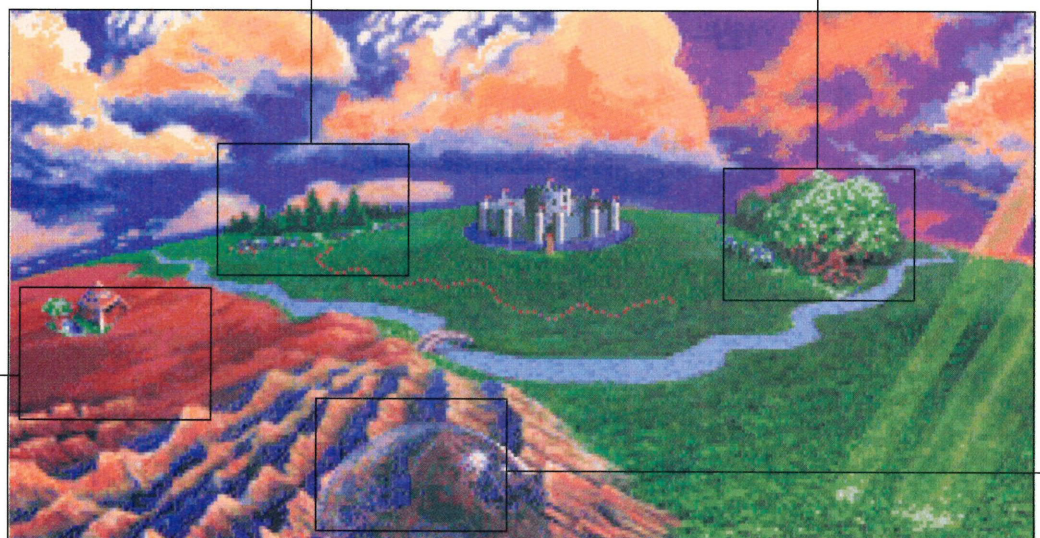
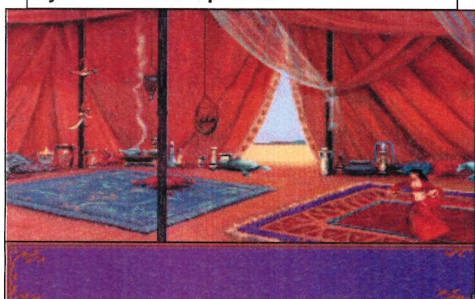
However, there is hope. Although Sanwe is exceptionally powerful, there is a way to defeat him - the powerstones. Your initial task is thus - find the stones, travel to the evil magician's tower inside the shield of imprisonment and defeat him on his own ground.

*The quest for these* stones takes you to all four corners of your kingdom. From the sweltering heat of the desert to the bewildering land of the Fairies and the surreal realm of the shape-shifters to Sanwe's tower itself, the search is a long and perilous one. There are several twists to the plot, but to



One of the sub-games, in the Fairie's maze. Only members of Mensa need apply to tackle this infuriating logic test

Entertainment, Soptus Ecliptus (Desert Nomads) style. Full of eastern promise



The kingdom of Gran Callahach, over which you reign

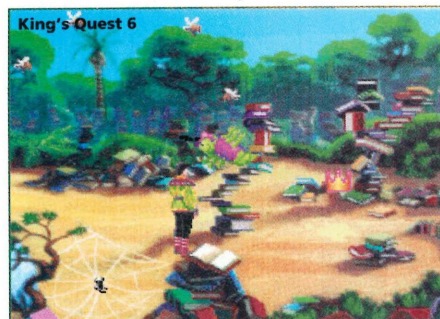




Prince Callash (that's you, that is) – all round hero, saviour of the people and amateur rock climber

## déjà-vu

**K**ing's Quest 6 is very similar to Dragonsphere, being a fantasy graphic adventure. In terms of aesthetics, King's Quest is certainly both graphically inferior and doesn't have as compelling an atmosphere. King's Quest tends also to be more than a little sickening in places, although it is still a perfectly good adventure in its own right. The two games are very similar in the style of puzzles they offer the intrepid adventurer. In my opinion, however, Dragonsphere outclasses KQ by some distance.



King's Quest 6

# 'The grim reaper is a frequent visitor, but death isn't the handicap it used to be'

reveal these would spoil the game – let's just say there is more to the game than there first appears to be.

The grim reaper will certainly be a worryingly frequent visitor, but the game is quite forgiving – death isn't the handicap it used to be in the olden days.

Instead of killing you off and making you restore your last saved game, which can be annoying if you are forgetful in your saving routine, Dragonsphere puts you back into the game just before you made your fatal error. This may sound like a bit of a cop out, and to an extent it is, but in practice it works well.

Before the game begins, it is possible to set the difficulty level at either novice or challenging. The instruction manual urges all players to at least try the higher setting, but this may well prove too

much for the uninitiated. Novice levels offer a lot of extra hints on both the text and the graphics, but is hardly a give away in itself.

**Stepping into the** world of Dragonsphere you are immediately enveloped by the atmosphere of the game. Several factors contribute towards this entrapment – the attention to detail, the music and sound effects, and, of course, the visuals. Click on anything in this game, and you will get a lengthy description, no matter how insignificant the object is. And this certainly adds a feeling of real depth to the proceedings.

On top of this, the background music is suitably moody, unobtrusive and changes from major location to location to give some variety. FX-wise, there are some nice touches, but the main feature is the full speech throughout the game, a facility that is more or less

compulsory for a CD adventure. In-game speech, most notably in the so called range of 'interactive movies', is generally hammy in the extreme. However, it is hardly feasible to hire Emma Thompson and Anthony Hopkins to dub the parts.

Dragonsphere's speech does well in that it is rather excellent in places and certainly one of the most successful efforts yet – the echo effect the program creates is superb and the voices of some of the more supernatural beings are breath-taking. This doesn't stop it from being damn annoying in other places, though – the voices of the fairies make you want to put your fist through the monitor screen.

Graphically, the game is something of a treat. Callash, the hero, is smoothly animated, as are the other characters and they are all depicted with a somewhat impressionistic flavour.

Nothing has been drawn with hard edges. These make a rich combination when mixed in with some of the beautifully moody backgrounds, bar the odd exception where things seem a little too unclear.

Another positive aspect is the interface. Everything is very simple – the left mouse button is used to guide Callash around and the right is user definable. In other words, you can make it 'look', or 'take', or 'talk to' – whatever is most appropriate to your current situation. More specialised commands only appear when you pick an object up, ie. when you get a sword, the commands 'attack', 'thrust' and 'carve up' will appear when you hi-light it for use.

Although this takes a bit of getting used to, once sussed it is a pretty superb control system.



The Dragonsphere – still relatively intact, but not for much longer

## data bank

CONVENTIONAL MEMORY  
575K

MINIMUM MEMORY  
4MB

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS  
386 SX25

OPTIMUM  
486 SX

HARD DISK SPACE  
1.75MB

GRAPHICS  
MCA/VGA

SOUND CARDS  
Adlib, Roland, S/Blaster

CONTROLS  
Mouse/Keyboard

TRANSFER RATE

Min = 150KB/sec Optimum = 300KB/sec

## appraisal

**R**ight, so is there anything wrong with Dragonsphere? Not a lot, really. Sometimes it can be difficult to make out what a character has said, but you can always turn the text boxes on as well as the speech. Cut scenes can't be skipped and when you've seen them a couple of times this can be a touch frustrating. Some may well find the difficulty level overwhelming and you are unlikely to enjoy this if you hate the medieval fantasy world concept – you do have to play the noble Lord to a tee. Despite minor niggles, the game is a superb graphic adventure of the highest calibre – but it is very hard. Parts are tricky, other bits trickier and some sections can lead to critically high blood pressure levels. On the other hand, the sense of achievement gained through

progress is immense. Dragonsphere deserves to be big – it is a finely honed, high quality product.

DARREN ALLAN

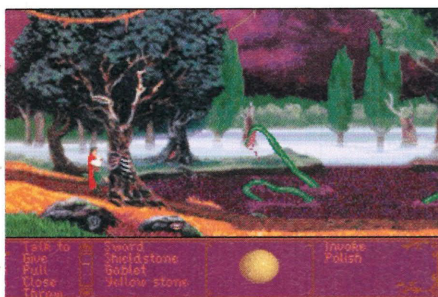
## second opinion

**B**eginning with the superbly animated intro, the experience is more like watching a period fantasy adventure cartoon than playing an adventure game. But this cuts both ways. For while the wealth of detail may well make this the most detailed graphic adventure ever and while the background storyline is totally engrossing, this level of detail is also pretty frustrating and takes absolutely ages unless you have a double speed CD and a 486.

DAVID LONGWORTH

PCA SCORE

90%



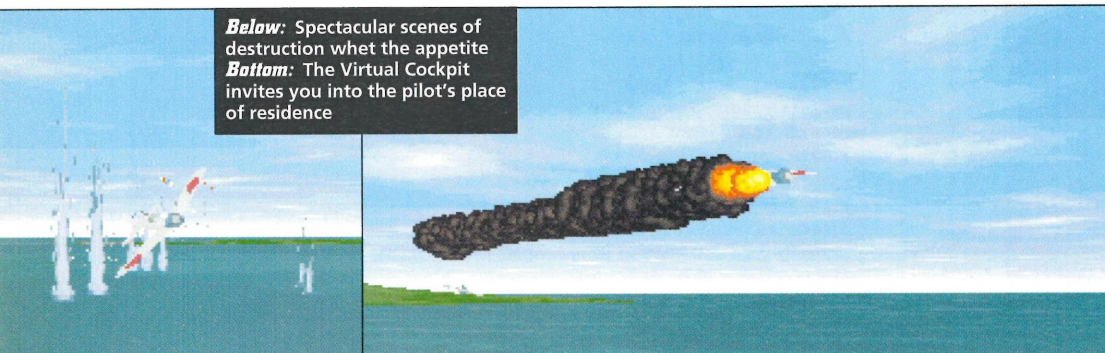
This place is weird – Slathan ni Patan, land of the highly mistrusted hapechangers

This is the magical shield that seals Sanwe in – for the time being





**Below:** Spectacular scenes of destruction whet the appetite  
**Bottom:** The Virtual Cockpit invites you into the pilot's place of residence



**d**espite a sparring rivalry with Origin, MicroProse have often enjoyed the elation that goes with the title of flight supremos, undisputed or not. But aren't aerial simulations, well, two a penny on the PC now? Hasn't the sheer weight of offerings darkened our skies?

Rather than singling out a lone bright star, it's becoming more a case of sloughing through a gathering mass of sodden clouds and waiting for one to splash a drop of 'unmissability' on the potential games buying public.

But how do you make one simulation really stand

# RAT A TAT TAT

In the heady days of **1942 The Pacific Air War** rages. Shredding the enemy like a cheese grater, just whose side are you on – the Japs or the Yanks..?

out from its neighbour? How exactly do you then generate that 'feel good, play even better aura' to the expectant hopefuls?

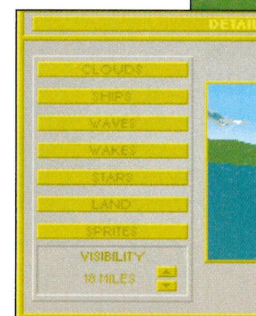
Acute attention to detail is a deciding factor. Realism also adds another rung to the echelon of success. Compound these with action, dramatics, sheer variety, and the game will begin to build up its own idiosyncratic characteristics.

**MicroProse's previous** sims ( B-17 Flying Fortress, Falcon 3.0, Gunship 2000 etc) have all fared well in their heyday. But what will make their latest 1942 Pacific Air War, due to be shipped in April, so different to other flight sims?

'We're taking our famous simulation expertise and technology and applying it to dogfighting,' explains Carl Knoch, product manager of 1942 PAW before then proceeding to blow the team's collective trumpet. 'Flight simulation fans are going to be amazed at the features this game possesses.'

The battles extend over the panoramas of the Coral Sea, Midway, Eastern Solomons, Santa Cruz and the Philippine Sea. Dogfights, high speed dives and hair raising sky chases will all feature heavily, as will the strategy element of the game, bidding players to push their gaming skills to the limit and decipher the shady manoeuvrings of enemy naval and skyborne forces.

The game originators have also been keen to expand on how the



## 'THE LEVELS OF





**Left:** What a beauty! A direct hit annihilates the Japanese craft and down she goes. But there are still up to 70 aircraft, friend or foe, in the skies at this particular time **Right:** You can view your aircraft from a number of different perspectives **Below Left:** Within the cockpit the player can look all around him just by moving the cursor

**Left:** As well as lone missions, both sides also have the opportunity to engage in formation flying and attack in squadrons to create more of an impact before the dog-fighting properly begins **Below:** Over sea and land in and around the Pacific islands and engaging in a vast assortment of missions, the fighters risk their lives for the good of their country, whichever nationality you decide them to be

turn of phrase 'between the devil and the deep blue sea' has more than just overtones in this particular case book.

In these war torn skies over the South Pacific during the course of World War II, the player will be faced with an equitable representation of both the goodies and the baddies. The choice between playing either on the Japanese or the American side is entirely at the player's discretion. The ultimate outcome of the war is consequently not dictated from the start.

All the experts involved in the general production of the game, whether they be historians or pilots or even the game's designers themselves, resolutely echo the

opinion of John Paquin, the graphics programmer. 'The levels of bravery and desperation of the pilots involved in the Pacific War were of an order never seen before and something that will probably never be seen again. These were heroes literally prepared to sacrifice their lives for their countries, whether that be on the Japanese or American side.'

The underlying principle is that

the 'enemy' deserves a little more than mere relegation to computer controlled status. As Knoch reiterates: 'Because you

can command American or Japanese forces, there's a tremendous opportunity to experience these awesome battles from fascinating viewpoints. This was not really a political decision but a gameplay decision. Both sides in this conflict were very evenly matched but used different aircraft. We wanted to give the player the opportunity to fly all the major aircraft that were involved in the war.'

**In fact the Japanese** Zero became just as infamous as the American planes, so why not get the chance to experience it alongside the other nine planes? They were primarily selected because they were the aircraft that saw the most action during the period of this conflict. They were also the aircraft to afford the player a greater variety in the mission types with fighters, bombers and torpedo planes from both sides to get to grips with.

Just as the development time for 1942 PAW is drawing to a close in the USA MicroProse camp, so too is the F-14 Tomcat Simulation Fleet Defender having its 'i's dotted and its 't's crossed. This sim accurately recreates carrier based operations and invites gamers

to participate in air to air combat and special intercept missions with frighteningly authentic weapons and radar systems.

The two teams working on both flight sims side by side, although careful not to tread on each others toes, have taken it upon themselves to confer and swap notes while in production. Both games share a 3D engine but even so this has been implemented in very different fashions so as to give a customised feel to each individual game.

Joining Carl K and John Paquinnoch are lead programmer Ed Fletcher and lead artist Todd Brizzi. ▶

# BRAVERY AND DESPERATION OF THE PILOTS IN ▶



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## RAT A TAT TAT

► Max Remington completes the team and has been responsible for programming the 3D objects that give the planes their superb texture and realism.

But before making the first tentative steps in the areas of programming and designing, a simulation of this nature has to be fastidiously researched. Conferences with military experts and data have to be attained. The guys at MicroProse are the first to admit that research has been unprecedented.

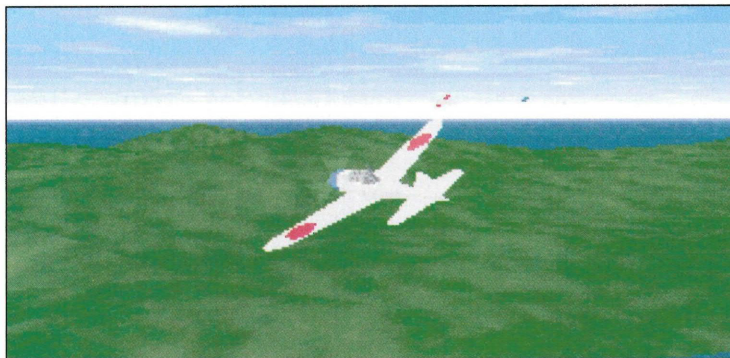
'We obtained original flight training manuals for all the aircraft involved in the simulation,' says John Paquin, 'the Japanese office even got hold of the manuals for the Japanese fighters and bombers. Besides that we had access to all the usual Jane's Manuals and books, and it really helped being only one hours drive away from the US Navy Institute at Indianapolis and all the museums in Washington DC.

**'On a personal note'** the team interviewed surviving pilots from the Pacific campaign, some of whom are family members. The experts were able to fill in some of the information that the manuals left out like what you do when your machine guns jam with the enemy bearing down on you and also what it actually felt like to be in the midst of battle.'

Trivialising war is not on the menu and although some veterans of the second world war could be less than keen to spill the beans on events, especially upon learning that a game is to be made out of their exploits, John stresses the receptiveness of the experts.

'A gentleman by the name of Admiral William P

**Below:** As well as air to air combats, air to ground battles will also feature to a certain extent in the game. Here weswoop over a tanker ship



**Left:** In 1942: The Pacific Air War players will have the opportunity to take on the 'enemy' so to speak and fly some stunning Japanese models, not least of which is the infamous Japanese Zero  
**Below:** Razor sharp reflexes incite an aerial one on one attack and the aggressor is brought down in a glorious wave of destruction

**Below Left:** Over the seeming calm of the Pacific, a battle torn war rages

Mack who actually commanded a fleet during the campaign was a great source of information on carrier battle tactics,' he adds.

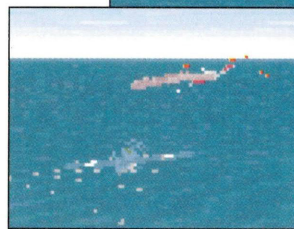
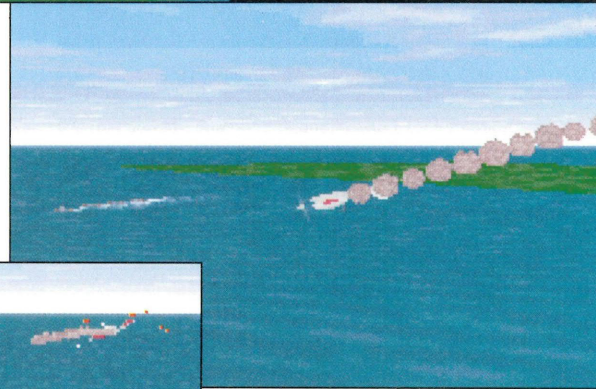
Once collated, this information then starts to thread the bare bones of the game together and detail gets the attention it deserves. The virtual cockpit in the game is looking particularly impressive. The result of a new texture-mapping system that is part of the 3D engine, it scrolls according to the player's directions, thereby capturing the feeling of turning your head in the cockpit and abandoning the jump between maybe four or five unrelated viewing angles.

Looking beyond the pilot's close confines, there will be up to 16 planes (all fully textured and Gouraud shaded) in the air at any given time. Ships aren't mere ornaments and will take evasive action if attacked. They will also realistically sink rather than just change shape or disappear without a trace.

All in all it is hoped there will be close to 400 set missions, time permitting, in the final game. Of these over 200 will be actual historical missions and the rest will be realistic 'could have happened' type scenarios.

Should players become restless there is also the opportunity, as is fast becoming the norm, to fiddle with the Mission Builder feature. 'This was used to develop the set historical missions that are included in the game,' explains John, 'so you can imagine the flexibility this allows.' Players can identify real ships, bases or enemy squadrons as targets and then decide which aircraft from which bases and carriers they want to send.

If restlessness still attempts to



settle in, then gamers will only have about a month to wait before modem play

becomes available. Although still a fairly small proportion of the market, it is nevertheless growing. During modem play gamers will be able to control multiple aircraft on both sides.

All those involved in the development and marketing of 1942 PAW believe that they have put MicroProse back in the lead in terms of flight sim development. And is it there that they are content to stay. No member of the team shows any interest in encroaching on other game genres. 'This is what we do best and this is what we will continue to do best,' is the response.

Looking to the future this group will probably be split in two. Half will produce a scenario disk for the game and then go on to develop the follow up product, adding fuel to the fire power of a war that drew to a close over 50 years ago. The other half will be working on a new project that still remains shrouded in that inimitable cloak of secrecy. A flight sim it is deemed to be. With such highly lucrative background information and a wealth of talent with which to use it, why the hell not?

SHARON GREAVES

PAW

# WAR WERE OF AN ORDER NEVER SEEN BEFORE'

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**Top:** Star Destroyers form part of the clean new 3D graphical look inbetween the main state of play. In X-Wing it wasn't a good idea to get too close to a Star Destroyer, but now you can without getting the slightest of burns **Above:** In TIE Fighter you aren't as dashing as Skywalker and friends, but as a TIE pilot, life could be so much more fun **Below:** If you've read the Anthony Zahn book trilogy on Star Wars then you should recognize this man as Admiral Thrawn, scourge of the Rebel Alliance and now one of your new soul mates



# WHY THE IS STRIKIN

Have LucasArts betrayed us by defecting to the Imperial side for the eagerly awaited sequel to X-Wing? We find out why **TIE Fighter** still has the force on its side, even though it's now the dark side of Darth Vader

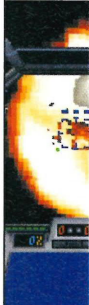


## 'X-WING WAS MORE LIKE AN AD

**L**ucas Arts have a lot to answer for. Not content with luring many innocent gamers to join the rebellion as X-Wing pilots in the best selling space combat simulator of 1993, they are now asking us to climb into the cockpit of a flimsy TIE Fighter as Imperial Navy Recruits and help crush that same rebellion.

'It's been both exciting and challenging to explore previously uncharted territories of the Star Wars fantasy and peer into the minds of these imperial characters,' says award-winning designer Lawrence Holland. The plot is straight out of the Empire Strikes Back, but in this spin on the original story, you are flying under Darth Vader and Admiral Thrawn, picking off rebel X-Wings as they abandon their base on the ice planet Hoth.

And looking at things from the Empire's point of view isn't such a betrayal as it might seem. The Empire



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# EMPIRE G BACK



**Left:** Today we will be looking through the round window....This shuttle is making a run for it. **Above Right:** This man of course needs no introduction, killer of thousands and the mastermind behind Imperial Deviance. **Right:** The setting is different but the idea's the same, enrol your pilot, train him up and go for a spin. **Far Right:** Even tougher than Chewbacca and with more force than Luke's dad and Obi Wan Kenobi put together, the emperor oversees all



## VENTURE GAME THAN A FLIGHT SIM - TIE FIGHTER



is portrayed as restoring peace to a region wracked by war since the breakdown of the alliance and the rebels are now outlaws trying to tear apart the established order.

The game will contain all the best elements of the X-Wing formula and, judging by the demo, the view from the dark side looks remarkably similar.

The 3D polygon spacecrafts, the

striking Bitmap special effects in lightning and explosions, the fluid flight engine - these are back in all their glory. A little gouraud shading has been added to round off the edges of those uncompromising polygons, but the basics are the same.

Pilots who proved themselves last year in X-Wing's virtual reality training ground and the historical combat missions will have the chance to refresh those skills on the Imperial space station.

And adding to this feeling of déjà vu is the Blueprint Room, containing familiar ship types, and the Film

Room. The beauty of X-Wing was that it successfully re-created the atmosphere of the Star Wars movies from the roar of the TIE Fighter right down to the beeps of your R2 unit. The digitally mastered sound effects and studio recorded voices are back, courtesy of LucasArts's Imuse sound system and that dramatic movie-style score plays right through the game, by accessing music 'on the fly'.

**Edward Kilham developed** an effective story engine called Landru for X-Wing and this will be rolling out full-screen cinematic sequences again for TIE Fighter, filling in the background to the involved plot. And a book full of photos and illustrations comes with the package, telling the story of a young imperial navy recruit.

LucasArts know when they're onto a good thing. 'We received so much positive feedback from fans of X-Wing,' says Lawrence Holland, 'but we believe there's always room for improvement. So we set out to provide gamers with some important new features,

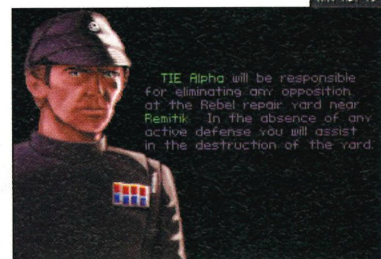
including more non-linearity in the structure of the battles and greater strategic insight into the missions.'

One of these new features is the chance to direct questions to the briefing officer via dialogue options, thus gaining insights into how best to complete each mission. 'If a pilot chooses to wave that option in the briefing room, it's not too late to change his or her mind once in flight,' says Holland. 'Pilots will have a computer on board that can access that same information at any time.'

Where X-Wing consisted of four 'tours of duty', making you complete each mission in sequence, TIE Fighter's 40 plus missions are said to be 'non-linear'. What this means is that you choose one of four places to be stationed and if you get stuck on the ▶



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## WHY THE EMPIRE IS STRIKING BACK

► missions there, you can relocate to another station, another battle and another part of the story.

Designers Holland and Kilham have indeed listened to our little whinges about their game and this comes partly in answer to the charge that X-Wing was too difficult. The update discs Imperial Pursuit and B-Wing provided one solution with on-line hints, but TIE Fighter goes one step further by allowing you to vary the difficulty level.

'We have implemented easy, medium and hard levels that players can select at the beginning of the campaign,' says Kilham. 'This should help players with various abilities enjoy TIE Fighter in its entirety.'

Of course he's right. It would be criminal to miss out on any part of the Imperial campaign. For after a range of missions in TIE Fighter, TIE Interceptor and Assault Gunboat, you can take the helm of the TIE Advanced Starfighter, personally designed by Darth Vader, before

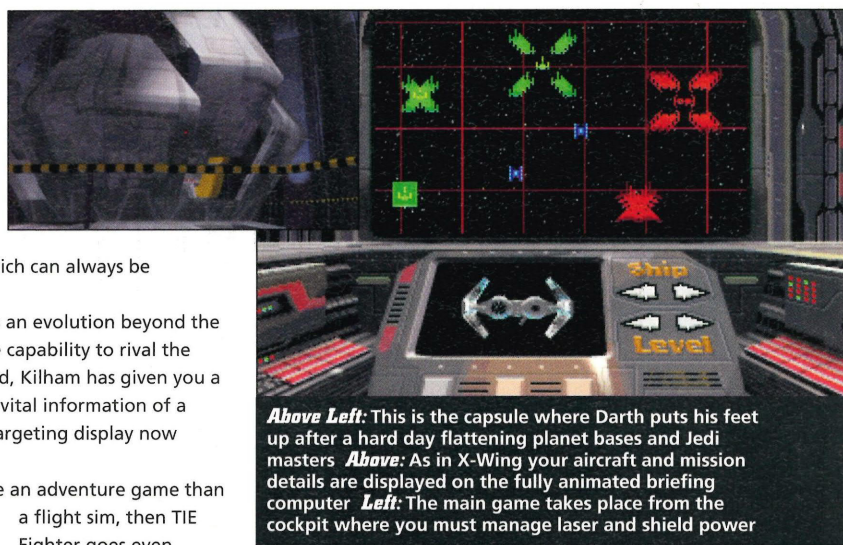
progressing to the mysterious TIE Deluxe.

This represents a break from the flimsy basic TIE Fighter, whose strength lies in group formation flying. The Deluxe has shields, lasers, a tractor beam and missiles with a great variety of warheads which can always be reloaded mid-mission.

According to Kilham, this is an evolution beyond the TIE Advanced. It will have the capability to rival the rebel's finest ships. To this end, Kilham has given you a new threat display providing vital information of a selected ship and improved targeting display now operating in real time.

If X-Wing seemed more like an adventure game than

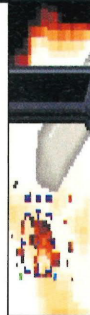
a flight sim, then TIE Fighter goes even further down that flight path. 'TIE Fighter will have more of a pure storyline look and feel,' says Edward Kilham. 'Players will be able to ask questions and get more information on each mission's objective, story and strategy.'



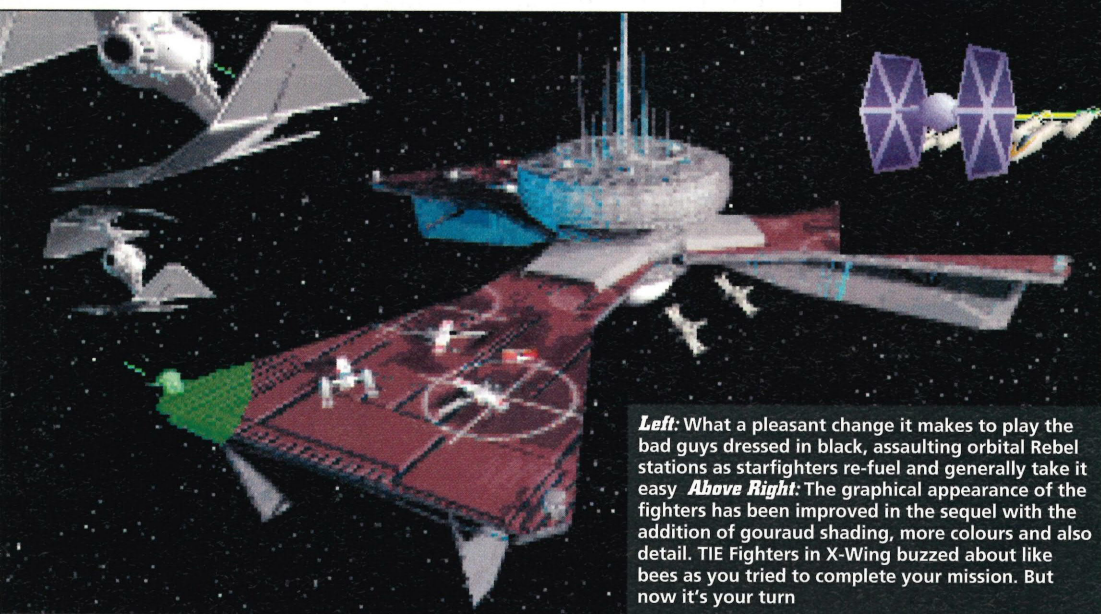
**Above Left:** This is the capsule where Darth puts his feet up after a hard day flattening planet bases and Jedi masters **Above:** As in X-Wing your aircraft and mission details are displayed on the fully animated briefing computer **Left:** The main game takes place from the cockpit where you must manage laser and shield power

Missions are in fact much longer and more involved. Radio messages keep you fully informed about your progress and you now have more control over your wing men. But hand in hand with the new realism comes a new continuity. If you lose that important wing man on an early mission, he will not now return.

The various generic features of X-Wing will make it seem bland when compared to the depth of TIE Fighter. Where the original classic has a range of standard space tugs and containers, the new, improved version has dozens of support ships, space platforms



## ► IS ABOUT TO GO EVEN FURTHER DOWN THAT PATH'



**Left:** What a pleasant change it makes to play the bad guys dressed in black, assaulting orbital Rebel stations as starfighters re-fuel and generally take it easy **Above Right:** The graphical appearance of the fighters has been improved in the sequel with the addition of gouraud shading, more colours and also detail. TIE Fighters in X-Wing buzzed about like bees as you tried to complete your mission. But now it's your turn



and various supply vehicles. 'The player will encounter several new spacecraft,' says Holland, 'including Space Platform Targets, which are innovative space stations.'

You can even call back to base for support if you get into trouble or fly back to base if you run out of missiles and reload.

But things aren't as simple as they first seem on the dark side and a sub-plot runs through the story. You find out more about this by talking to the mysterious cloaked figure who accompanies your briefing officer and become involved in a secret society of elite pilots, and may even end up defending the Empire against corruption from within. The reversal is complete. By Summer you'll be a fully fledged Imperial pilot. Having learnt to handle the various spacecraft in the training sequences and flown all the missions you'll be eagerly awaiting the next two update discs. And one thing's for sure – the force will be with you.

DAVE LONGWORTH

PIA





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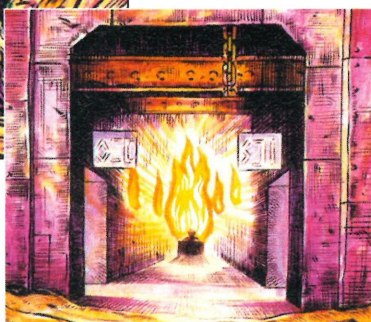
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# DIG IT

Millennium's **Diggers** has been described as a Lemmings clone. How much justice does this do to the game?



**A** decade ago a simple experiment in real-time with a little man living in a house inside your computer inspired a generation of games, including blockbusters such as *Lemmings* and *Populous*.

Little Computer People, or 'LCP' to give its industry generic label, caused an investigation into computer supported life which has developed to a sophisticated level. But if *Populous* was a rather ethereal affair and *Lemmings* a sophisticated executive toy, then Cambridge-based design house Millennium believes it has come up with the first legitimate use of this form of artificial intelligence in an arcade game.

*Diggers* works on all levels and will undoubtedly appeal to arcade style fans and strategy minded folk alike. Designed by Millennium's resident boff, Toby: 'With *Diggers*, I followed my instincts as a gamesplayer rather than trying to intellectualise games.' The concept has been likened to *Lemmings*. He however believes that *Lemmings* and *Diggers* are poles apart: 'Lemmings was a clever idea, but it really is little more than an executive toy. *Diggers* has got true interactivity and strategy, combining the LCP idea with real physical control. It really is the next generation.'

Disclaiming any inspiration from the likes of *Lemmings*, Toby admits to coming up with the idea for *Diggers* whilst answering the call of nature. 'I was thumbing through a text book in research for a game based on medieval sieges.

'In one chapter of ruses designed to wile away time, the sieging army would dig beneath the foundations of the castle, prop the walls up with massive timbers and set light to the precarious wooden structures. I thought of the smug people in the castle and suddenly the fortification suddenly crumbles to the ground. The

idea of digging to undermine the enemy was tantalising and so the seige idea was shelved for a mining game.'

Players can choose one of four indigenous mining races, each with different characteristics and mining skills as well as traits ranging from fatigue to stupidity.

The rather odd Herbish tribes, for example, will suddenly cease work, get down on their hands and knees and pray. These quirky holymen do, however, possess ethereal qualities which enable them to transport to enemy digs to undermine production. The Habish are intelligent, while the Quarriers are built for the rigours of digging.

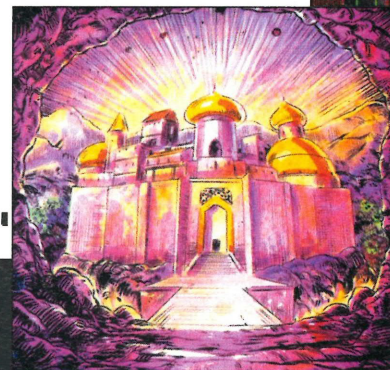
*Diggers* presents a choice of mining venues. The nature of each dictates a certain type of playing style, from the treacherous lava pools beneath the desert to the underworld beneath the forest. Toby explains: 'Beneath each sort of surface is something different which requires a different strategy.' There are 32 levels, each a vast area of 72 screens featuring seven different styles depicting the underworld.

Toby's aim has been to develop a game which can be played on a number of levels: 'There are two types of computer intelligence. The miners which are not in player control continue to do tasks and there are miners which grow rather bored with a dig. The player becomes a sort of mine manager.'

The main control interface is a menu which features commands to dig, run, walk, search and pick up jewels. Toby continues: 'We've introducing some inventive play tactics including the ability to infuriate opposing mining teams by undermining their excavation and even blowing up the enemy with explosive charges normally used for excavation.'

Play tactics are down to the ingenuity of the player with few pre-supposed demands made by the designer. Toby describes it as 'an arcade *SimCity* with platforms.' Younger players can switch into an arcade style of play and older strategy driven players will enter into the element of mining management. Indeed the game is designed to work on many levels.'

JASON SPILLER



**Above:** The scene is set with the intro  
**Below:** The *Diggers* get underway







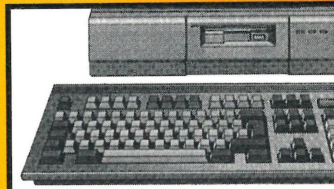
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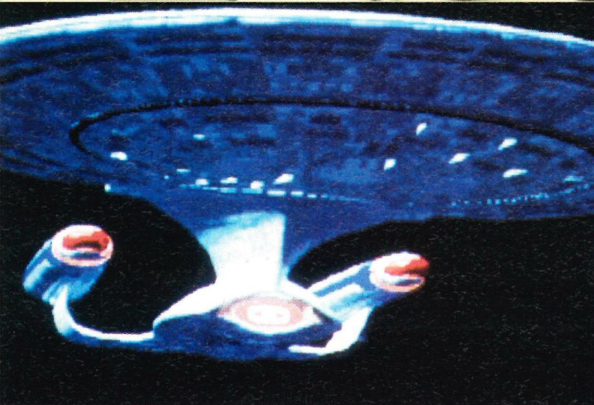
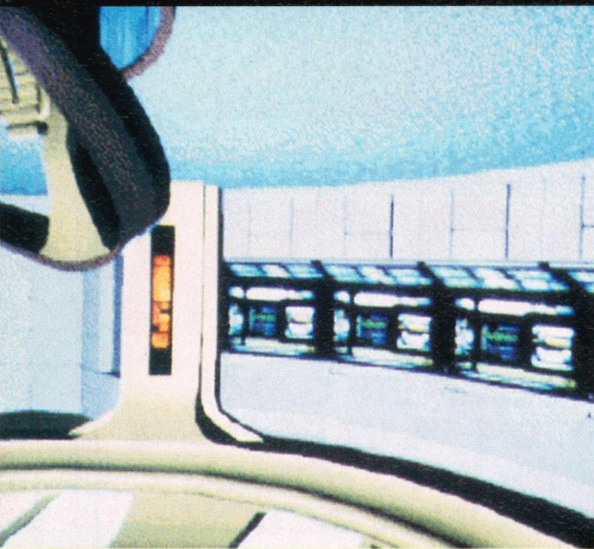
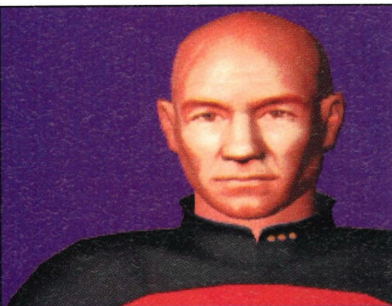
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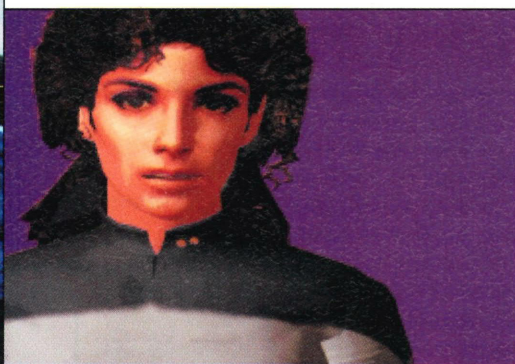
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**Right:** Jean Luc Picard, captain of the USS Enterprise at your command  
**Below:** The Starship heads off into unknown territory



# STAR TREK BEYOND THE U

**The bridge is yours  
Commander.  
Welcome aboard the  
USS Enterprise. *Star  
Trek, The Next  
Generation* is  
beaming far beyond  
the imagination and  
the TV screen**



**Left:** Graphics are carefully crafted and are accurate representations from the television series **Above:** Dianna Troy, the captain's councillor is available to give some much needed help **Above Left:** Inside the Starship, the main operations get underway

**b**eyond the papier mache sets that sway in the breeze, the cardboard cut out actors and the baby grow clothes, the perennial appeal of the Star Trek universe looks set to extend past this millenium and go boldly on towards a special cult status which no TV show has seen before.

Exploring and warping in and around interstellar solar systems and befriending and alienating new found races can become a mesmerising activity.

Moving away from the 'she gonna blow c'tain' and 'it's entirely logical' that have earmarked the original series, Star Trek: The Next Generation has rapidly grown into one of the hottest licences in the world, the number one syndicated show in the US, television that has inspired so many catchphrases and so much gentle derision.

*With millions of trekkies* around the globe, Star Trek is easily one of the most recognised names in today's culture. As early as 1991 rumours began to whisper that the show's licence was available from Paramount Pictures for various video game formats. The original series has already been licenced, with some considerable success to Interplay, (Star Trek: 25th Anniversary and Judgement Rites with another title to follow in late '94) thereby adding fuel to

## 'WE WANT PEOPLE

MicroProse's steadfast belief about the popularity of the franchise.

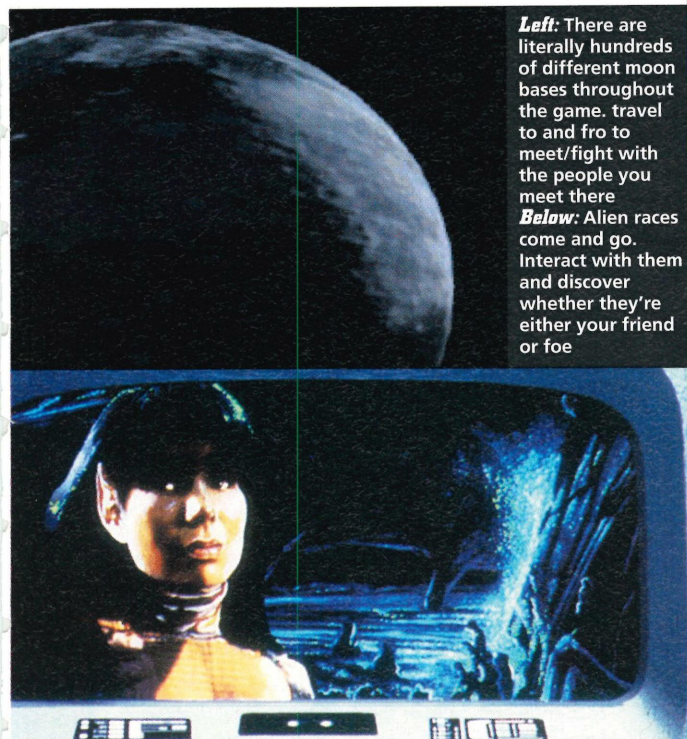
'It was worth some effort,' says Rita Harrington, public relation officer for MicroProse in the US offices when discussing the acquirement of the movie licence. 'We had a team work on the concept, do some prototyping and then we made our pitch to Paramount, in competition with other companies of course.' And before you could say 'warp factor five' Spectrum HoloByte had clinched the licence for PC formats and Super Nintendo by the end of the year. The game will also be released on Nintendo, 3DO and the Mega Drive now too.

Some work has been ongoing since '92 with a full team geared up in '93. Team size has varied during this

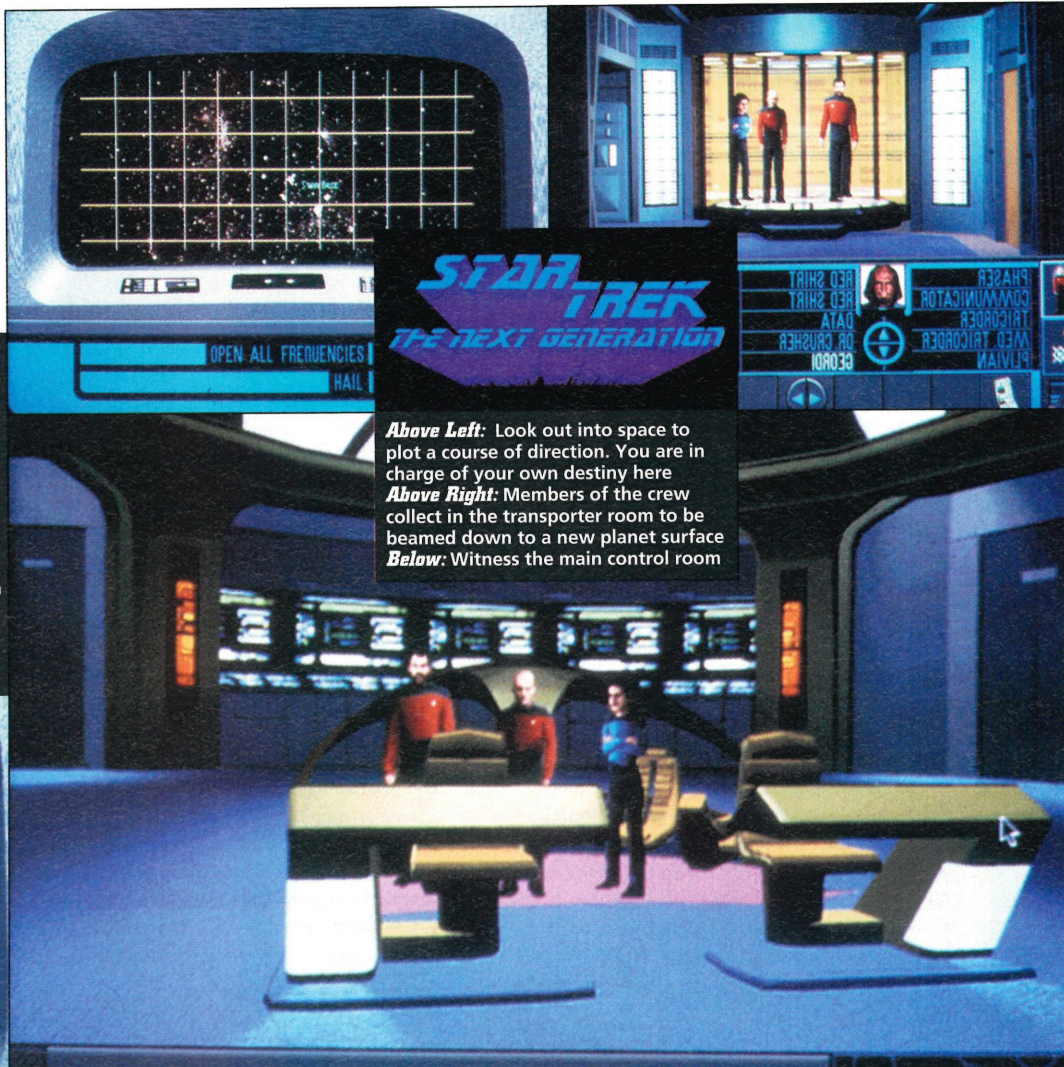




# KING NIVERSE



**Left:** There are literally hundreds of different moon bases throughout the game. travel to and fro to meet/fight with the people you meet there  
**Below:** Alien races come and go. Interact with them and discover whether they're either your friend or foe



**Above Left:** Look out into space to plot a course of direction. You are in charge of your own destiny here  
**Above Right:** Members of the crew collect in the transporter room to be beamed down to a new planet surface  
**Below:** Witness the main control room

## TO THINK, IT'S SPACE, I CAN GO WHEREVER I WANT. ▶

period with up to as many as 25 people, all inputting their views and idiosyncrasies to the product.

Although the different game platforms will feature slightly different styles of game, in essence the package involves galactic travelling and space adventuring while always being fastidious in maintaining the integrity of the galaxy.

Gamers can don the fetching clothes and hairstyles from one to all seven of the main players, either individually or as a team, as they embark on a quest for the Fifth Scroll. This acts as the major quest, although there are a further series of plotlines once in the thick of the action.

Action takes place above the Starship Enterprise, home base in the game, for want of a better

description. This needs to be manoeuvred within an indefinable 3D tactical space. Here is where the transporter for beaming down to planets is housed along with the obligatory navigation controls and various en-suite annexes occupied by the characters.

But action also expands to ground based activities. Paramount expressed some concern over the possibilities that the game could maybe take the form of a simple shoot'em-up, nothing more. Spectrum HoloByte have responded by being more than keen to quash such fears.

The Away Team can be beamed down to untainted surfaces and there the space travellers explore alien environments, unsure of what to expect. Here is where the adventuring and puzzling nature of the game

comes into its own. Literally 100s upon 100s of stars await the adventurer. Within and around these are challenges that the designers are still very reluctant to reveal. Of one thing we are sure though. The main plot turns out to be somewhat of a red herring and the true thread of action only emerges once players are midway through operations.

By all indications the decision not to take episodes directly from the television series but just to try and recreate the whole pervading atmosphere of the show and follow its guidelines has been a sound one.

Therefore all the PC game's episodes will come across as entirely new stories but there will still be the whole cast of seven major characters included.

'We set out to deliver interactive games as close to ▶





## STAR TREKKING BEYOND THE UNIVERSE

► the television series as technically and creatively possible,' Gilman Louie, chairman of the company declares, adding that not only will loyal Trekkies devour the games but games enthusiasts in general will be impressed. And so they should be, judging by the resources and talent that have so far been injected into the production.

To be assured of an authentic representation of the show, some huge names from the world of science fiction have been wheeled into the framework. Andrew Probert, one of the original concept designers behind the Enterprise and other spacecraft featured in the show, has lent his hand to designs for the game as well as putting his inimitable touch on most of the interior sets.

Also, one of the principal writers, Stephen Goldin, has written over 30 sci-fi novels, one even based on the original Star Trek series. It's called A Trek to Madworld.

**Gene Roddenberry** is a name synonymous with the creation and production of the Star Trek TV series. Matt Genser does not trip as lightly off the tongue, yet this is the senior project manager at Spectrum HoloByte, not to mention chief architect of the forthcoming game, to be issued under the MicroProse come rain or shine umbrella in May.

Genser's work has principally been concentrated within the software design sphere and down to him has fallen the triple talented task of writing, producing and directing the game. This entails guiding and supervising the, at times disproportionately large, team of programmers and musicians, all attempting to realise the extent of his ambition.

Not to be daunted by the God-like role he holds in this project, the light at the end of his particular tunnel has been to remain resolutely faithful to the TV series and the detail that it demands. 'The idea here,' he

explains, 'is that there's a story being told. And you are able to influence it.'

His hope of this release being a future paragon of the gaming world is clear for the world and his microchip to see. 'We've taken the classic Star Trek plot structure and tried to leverage off that. We're modelling a volume of space 160 light years wide.

'Currently there are two to three thousand stars, each with an average of six planets. The worlds are not linearly connected. The story forces you into a certain sequence, but there's a lot of freedom.

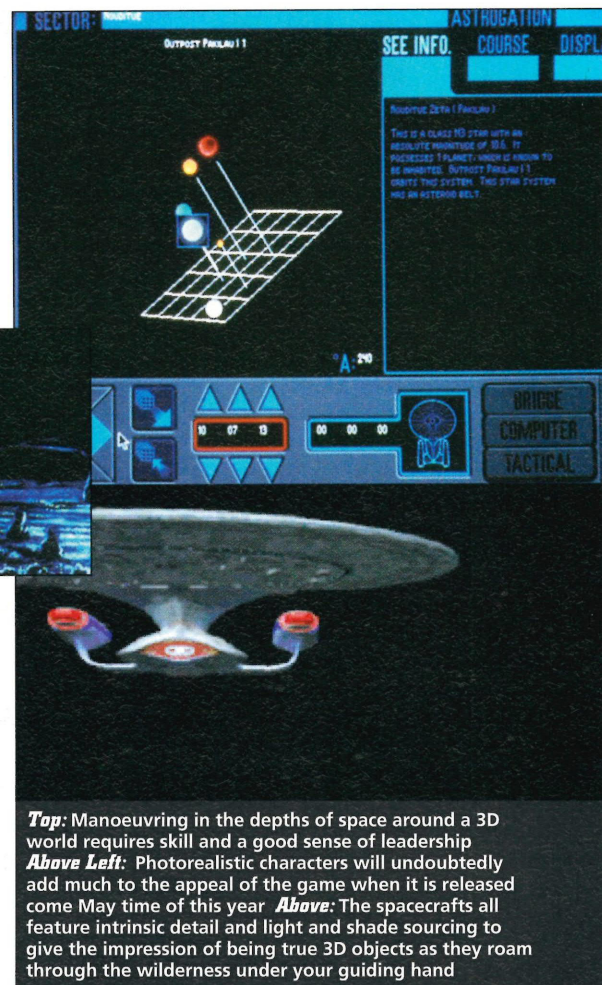
'One of the things we want is to have people think, it's space, I can go wherever I want to. The game is more of a mystery you have to unravel rather than a definite goal you have to reach.'

It is certain that the soundtrack will have original music as well as musical themes and sound effects from the show but on actors' voices we are unable to comment. Negotiations are still under way. Notwithstanding, all the protagonists from the American show will be on pixelated display.

To create their likeness the artists have worked from still photos of the characters before then setting to and animating them. Successive character poses are drawn on paper, rather like a cartoon, scanned in, then coloured and embellished if the graphic artists see fit. When the player engages with the game these separate drawings are flicked, in the blink of an eye, in sequence to create the impression that the characters are moving with the realism they deserve.

There is no promise of Full Motion Video of characters in the game and subsequently no deceit when it comes to describing it as a fully interactive adventure and having nothing more than set 'don't touch me' sequences. In this instance the player has total freedom to explore the worlds as he likes in a non-linear way.

**The rest of the in-game** graphics have been crafted from a variety of sources. Some are being modelled from props employed in the series whereas others, especially locations, have been either constructed using 3D modelling software (mainly the alien-esque places) or even hand painted (the more 'earthly' scenes) before then being scanned into the computer and touched up with painting software. Each location will be linked, if only indirectly, with others in the game so as to give that feeling of continuity and togetherness.



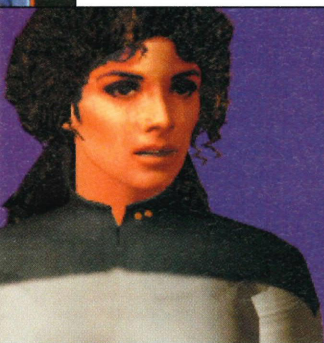
**Top:** Manoeuvring in the depths of space around a 3D world requires skill and a good sense of leadership **Above Left:** Photorealistic characters will undoubtedly add much to the appeal of the game when it is released come May time of this year **Above:** The spacecrafts all feature intrinsic detail and light and shade sourcing to give the impression of being true 3D objects as they roam through the wilderness under your guiding hand

As is fast becoming the trend of reputable software houses on both sides of the Atlantic, 'A Final Unity' will be available solely on CD-Rom simply because of the sheer weight of it. Obviously this allows the design team to load it with massive amounts of data, digitised speech, hopefully from the Star Trek actors themselves, music and a staggering liberalness of visuals complete with all the frills and as many of the series' accoutrements as possible.

Because the CD market is growing in leaps and bounds, maybe this will be just the ticket to convince border line cynics that a CD-Rom upgrade may well be just the thing. Not only should it appeal to gaming enthusiasts but will also hoist Trekkie couch potatoes from their TV Lasagne For One dinners and into a new interactive entertainment where the borders between doing and watching become increasingly indefinable.

SHARON GREAVES

**Left:** The images of Dianna Troy have resulted from a series of still photographs, all with different poses, which are then put together in rapid succession to give the impression of realistic character movement



# ► THE GAME IS MORE OF A MYSTERY TO UNRAVEL'



# for those in the know



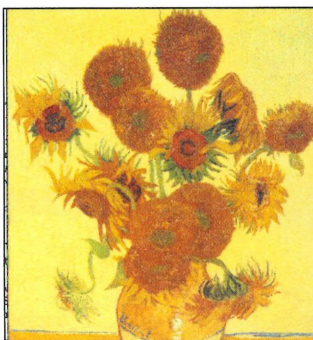
When Britannicas and Larousses are seeming stuffy and **Encyclopaedia:** a word of Greek derivation, given to academic, the new generation of PC-paedias promise to works which embrace a more or less complete account, revolutionise the presentation of knowledge. Visit an art in alphabetical order, of the whole field of human gallery or go back in time to the rock 'n' roll years knowledge or of some particular section of it

**I**f you visit the Sainsbury wing of the National Gallery, you'll find a section called the Microgallery with 12 large touch screens displaying information about the gallery's 2,200 fine art paintings. No one mentions the word computer, but leaf through the visitor's book on the desk there and on page after page you'll find people asking: 'Why can't they adapt this for my home computer?'

So Cognitive Applications did just that, converting their system for our trusty CD-Rom. 'It's a conversion with a few

features added,' says Ben Rubenstein, the technical director. 'The vast bulk of the information and the pictures are the same but we added sound features, a facility to show you how to pronounce the artists' names, a set of guided tours and some facilities which didn't make sense before, like being able to search all the 300,000 words of text.

'Plus we changed the way the software worked to get the best out of CD-Rom and computers which don't necessarily have vast amounts of memory, or may not be very fast. In the original Microgallery we ►





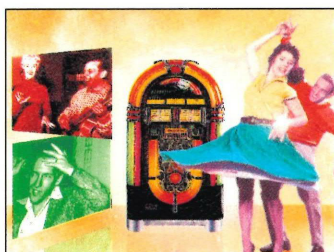
# for those in the know



► were able to specify how much memory we wanted and used one gigabyte of hard disc. The greatest challenge was to get the thing to work fast enough, and that was revisited when we came to do the CD-Rom.'

The technical problems facing PC-paedists have made most information databases incline towards the professional researcher rather than the home user. The Britannica Instant Research System contains all 44 million words of the Encyclopaedia text plus the Britannica Book of the Year and a dictionary and Thesaurus. By all accounts this would be a space-saving tool to have at home when it reaches this country, but for the one gigabyte hard disc space required to download two CD-Roms of information.

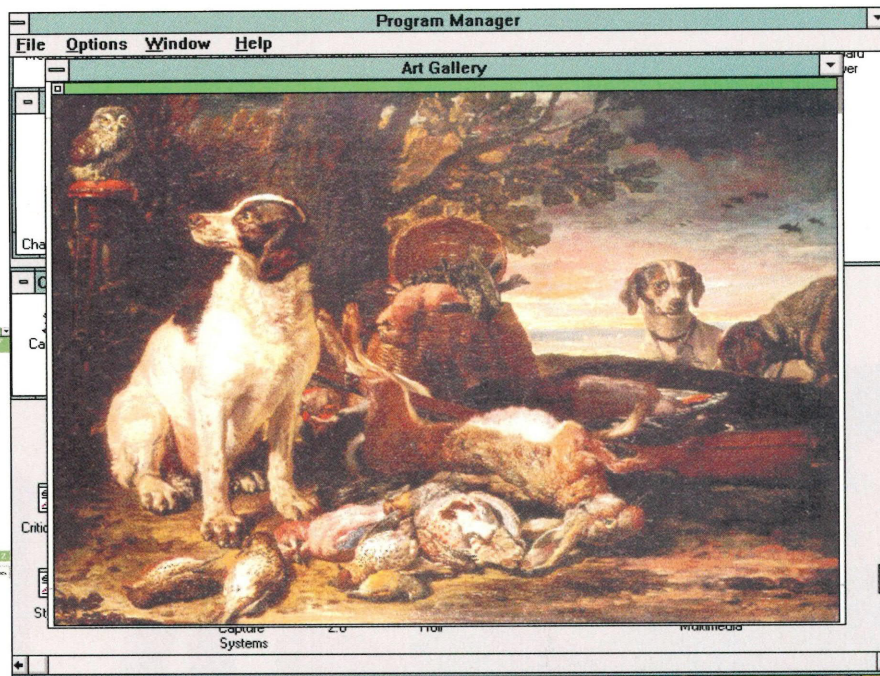
'But the technology is in place now for cultivation of the home market,' says Mike Clarke, the man behind Supervision's '50s nostalgia CD: 'We went around to all the companies a couple of years ago and they said The Rock 'n' Roll Decades couldn't be done



In the month that a survey showed that 40% of R&B records in L.A. were now being bought by whites, Fats Domino was going to the top of the R&B chart for the first time. Close behind were two gospel influenced records that would help shape R&B and rock'n'roll: 'Have Mercy Baby', a wild workout by The Dominoes, and the pounding 'Lawdy Miss Clawdy' by Lloyd Price (which incidentally featured Fats Domino on piano). The latter being another platter often cited as the 'first real rock'n'roll release'.

President Truman launches the worlds first atomic powered submarine - USS Nautilus.

R&B ramblings - As The Dominoes increased their visibility to pop record buyers by touring with Johnnie Ray (whose revival of the 1930 song 'Walkin' My Baby Back Home' was a current transatlantic hit). Dinah Washington released 'Mad About The Boy', which a reviewer said 'will make her a pop star'. Amazingly, it was a pop hit in Britain 40 years later, in 1992.



**Above left:** The alphabetical index - the National houses Britain's collection of fine art up until early this century

**Above:** The animals' subject index includes some pretty famous dogs

**Right:** Quintessentially British landscapes



because of copyright considerations and because digital video hadn't really happened then. So I was fighting to make sure that we were the first ones off the block when it did happen. And later the time was just right, with a combination of things. Digital video was just starting to happen, CD-Rom drives were sold for £200. All sorts of things chimed together.

'Our biggest problem was that there were still a lot of Mitsumi CD-Rom drives around. Every CD developer owes a debt of gratitude to Mitsumi because they were the ones who dropped the price below £200.

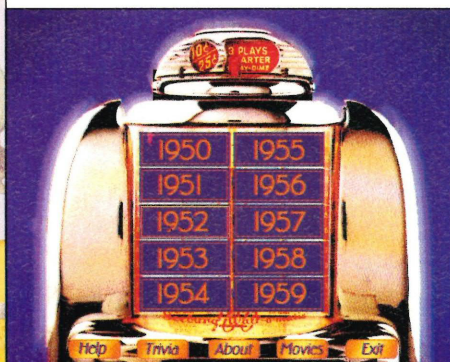
'But they are only single speed drives, so one of the problems we had to consider was whether we were going to run full screen video, which is impossible on single speed drives, or compromise and for the moment stick with the standard postage stamp-size screen. Full screen is the way ahead, when everybody has Reel Magic cards, but that's some way off in the future I think.'

The three programmers come from banking and financial backgrounds and Mike himself used to

work for Reuters but they have 'given up their day jobs' now and are planning to do a set of four decades right through to the '90s. 'The text is being worked on for the '60s at this moment. The video is quite sexy and we can go colour now', adds Mike. There are some nice images, with Hendrix, the Doors and so on. By this time next year we will have taken it right the way through to 1990 and there will be a four disc compilation.'

Pretty fast going that for four decades of pop history, each with the equivalent of 360 pages of text and over half an hour of video footage. But once the format and programming of a PC-paedia is in place, filling in the details for as many sequels as there is material is a well established practice. The information is nearly always taken from other sources, often books.

The new generation of truly multimedia products will soon be succeeding their forebears. 'If Microsoft Art Gallery were a book, it would be very valuable and



**Far Left:** Background info for each month of the Rock 'n' Roll decade. **Left:** Menu screens evoke the feel of that most stylish of decades





**m**indscape is the European arm of Software Toolworks, an American company with a large slice of the interactive information market over there. Of course they are streets ahead of this country in PC technology, but that also means advanced requirements to run these CDs.

Americanisation gets everywhere these days, from booming Yank commentary to the Stars and Stripes patriotism of anything to do with the good old US of A. Newsweek Interactive, now four volumes and soon to be extended to six, is no exception. If you are a big fan of baseball or really care what the UN is doing about green issues then this is for you. Taking articles from the worldwide magazine's ample store,



it stretches the word interactive to ridiculous extremes, by presenting a stark choice between reading an article, or having it read to you while you gawp at the admittedly beautiful pictures. To its credit is a session of head-on question time, where you can play the journalist and ask questions of top Baseball coaches or experts in various other fields. It's an expensive way to conduct an interview, but it does reek of possibilities. Video footage comes from CEL Communications, the largest video film archive in the States.

The shortcomings of video footage at the moment are demonstrated by the 20th Century Video Almanac, the title of which fools you into thinking it houses countless reels of film. While it does capture some big steps for mankind, most of the monthly snippets are stills. Its usefulness as a visual history lesson is limited because, to be honest, it's quite a selective scrapbook.

Many of these products could be classed as educational fun. In comparison World Atlas seems like hard work. With 4000 statistical maps, 250 topographic maps and charts, and graphs showing enough demographic material to last until Doomsday, it would make a much appreciated Christmas present for, say, a Euro MP.

One of the most popular encyclopaedia-style books in recent years has been the Guinness Book of Records. Sadly there's no sign of Norris McWerter on the Guinness Disc of Records and it's seriously in danger of taking all the fun out of being a record breaker.

But for the true trivia addict there's a pile of longest, shortest,

tallest and smallest, with video footage and illustrations to get the message across. Comes with an in-depth search mechanism and subject index allowing you to browse at your leisure.



respectable,' says Ben Rubenstein. 'But a book with 12,000 colour illustrations would be prohibitively expensive and a book with 5,000 pages would be quite heavy.'

The 300,000 words of text were written by experts at the gallery in a style anyone can understand. Ben, who with eight other programmers practically lived at the gallery for three years, describes himself as a model user. 'I'm interested in art, I like looking at it, I like finding out about it, but I am completely ignorant of it.'

Even easier to take in are the four guided tours, added to the CD-Rom version. Although the voice-over man threatens to send you to sleep, the tours embrace interesting themes like perspective. 'You couldn't do these tours at the gallery,' says Ben, 'because you would have to run from one end to the other. They also take advantage of things you can do on the computer but couldn't do to real paintings like drawing

## 'DIGITAL VIDEO WAS JUST STARTING TO HAPPEN, CD-ROM DRIVES WERE SOLD FOR £200. ALL SORTS OF THINGS CHIMED TOGETHER'

MIKE CLARKE THE MAN BEHIND THE ROCK 'N' ROLL DECADES

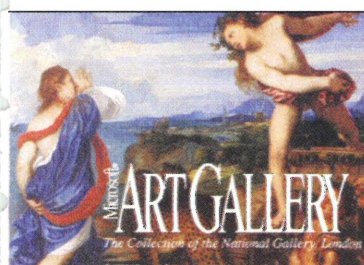
lines all over them and taking bits out of one and pasting them onto another.'

One round ceiling painting is dramatically cut into strips and put back together to make a square, not something the gallery would care to do, even with their photographs, from which these images are taken. The gallery has a complete set of photographs of their collection, but some of the older ones are black and white.

Ben explains why: 'The really important paintings get photographed quite frequently and so we have the best possible, up to date colour photos of these, but the paintings on

the B list don't get photographed so often and we have an early colour photo where the lighting isn't so good. With the real C list ones, when they were photographed, they only had black and white.' So rest assured that you don't really want to see the paintings in black and white anyway.

The all important ingredient is an archive of ready prepared information. In the case of the Rock 'n' Roll Decades this is the mind of Mr. Music, Dave McAleer. Dave has written a dozen books on the subject, either under his own name or under pseudonyms. Mike Reid's popular rock chronicles are actually written





# for those in the know



► by Dave and others, even though the famous DJ has put both his face and name to the books.

Reading from the back of one of his books reveals more clues to Dave's wealth of information: 'For 35 years Dave has collected information and trivia concerning records and during this time he has put together one of the largest collections of music trivia in the world. He was also the founder of the Trivia League, which preceded all the radio and TV pop quizzes.' That would explain the 720 plus questions peppering the game – Dave is a walking musical databank. 'He's a nice bloke as well,' adds Mike Clarke.

But words aren't enough to satisfy a generation hungry for sound bites. Most PC-paedias now contain bits of archive film footage, animation and music and so this game contains over 25 minutes of full motion video. This includes black and white archive video footage from interviews with film stars like James Dean to concert footage. 'It is quite difficult to track down,' says Mike, 'especially '50s material. It was basically taken from American or Canadian television.'

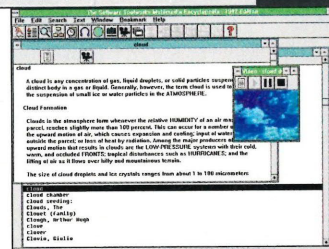
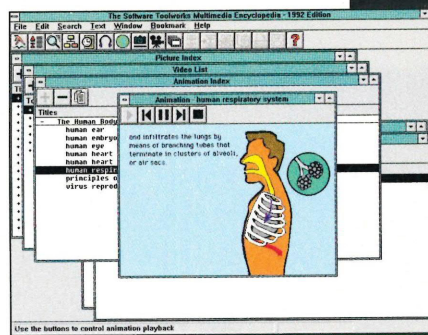
The great temptation when faced with a

novelty like that is to go through

watching all the video footage, but this game has another appeal, the 'on this day in history' factor. 'People normally go to the month where they were born and see what was in the charts on their Birthday or what was in the charts when they met their wife/husband,' says Mike. 'That is a starting point and then they go back to browse.'

'The Rock 'n' Roll years will sell for a bargain £24.99, another departure from the high cost, highbrow products of the past. 'I have a high opinion of most computer users,' says Mike. 'They are bright people who are open to new ideas. Although it's not immediately attractive to people who are too young to have any interest in that music, we are appealing to people who have an open mind, and as long as there is bundles on there and it's such a value thing, I want people to think: that's nice, that's cheap and just buy the thing.'

DAVID LONGWORTH



Cynics may scoff at the limited interactivity and unattractive subject matter of past PC-paedias, but they would never deny the huge meg potential of CD-ROM as both an information storage and retrieval medium.

The Grolier Multimedia Encyclopaedia is a huge surprise, firstly because it's really multimedia and secondly because it's really

an encyclopaedia. Based on an American series of the same name, it covers everything it should from the Ardvaark to the Zygote and features an informative knowledge tree presentation where you can

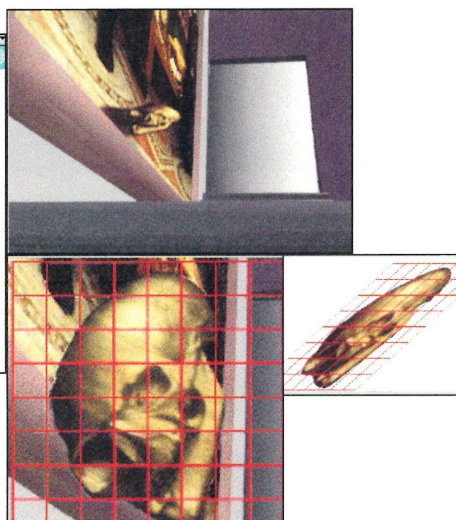
branch out to learn more. To stimulate senses not exploited by raw text, it has sounds of birdsong and Beethoven, maps, dates, pictures and, in the later versions, video sequences and animations. Even with all this sensual seduction, the most impressive and useful feat is the cross referencing, whereby you can leap from suffragettes to civil unrest. Least impressive is the Americanisation of the whole thing, which means that the famous speeches are notably lacking any Churchill and the history lesson is told from that condescending Uncle Sam viewpoint.

Though available for the home user, the price tag of nearly £300 makes it out of reach for most and it tends to be snapped up by educational establishments. Compton's New Media, £244 from Britannica I.T., is similarly popular with schools, coming as it does from such a reputable name, and the 15,000 pictures, 9 million words and 33,000 articles are cross-referenced with a system called Infopilot. This displays your central search item surrounded by four 'primary satellites', the four most pertinent topics. Ian Bailey, from Britannica, says they do sell products to home users, even at these prices.

More affordable, but currently unavailable is the Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia. Due to a marketing decision in the States, the price of this, Microsoft's PC-paedia, has dropped from £300 to £100, forcing a rush on the product and its subsequent unavailability. Production is due to move to the UK though, so we can expect to see Encarta wisdom again shortly.

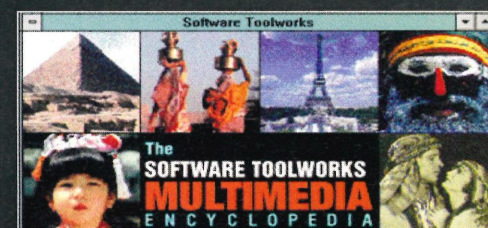


**Above and right:** Animated sequences explain anomalous aspects of various paintings. In this portrait, a skull lies on the carpet at the subject's feet. From full on it looks distorted and stretched, but from the intended viewpoint – climbing the stairs – an altogether different skull appears.



**'A BOOK WITH 12,000 COLOUR ILLUSTRATIONS WOULD BE PROBITIVELY EXPENSIVE AND A BOOK WITH 5,000 PAGES WOULD BE QUITE HEAVY'**

BEN RUBENSTEIN





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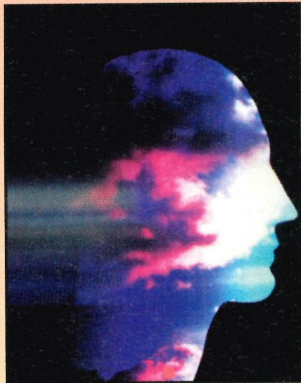
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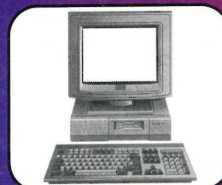
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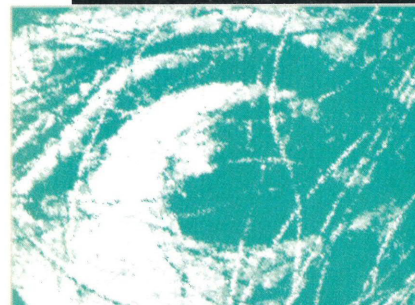
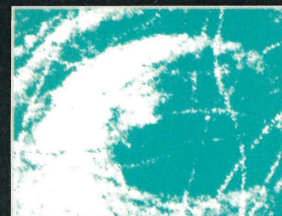
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# t h e s u r g e r y



## URED OF HIS AILMENTS, YOUR OCCASIONALLY FRIENDLY PHYSICIAN RETURNS TO HELP YOU THROUGH THOSE TIRESOME GAME-RELATED PROBLEMS

**C**I can see the headlines now. 'Brrr, it's cold', the tabloids will undoubtedly proclaim, and talk of the big freeze will be rife in all corners of the gutter press. On this occasion though I begrudgingly have to admit to wholeheartedly agreeing. As I write this, having just returned

from outside I can tell you that it is cold. Very cold in fact. A quick glance through the Surgery's windows shows a snowy scene more reminiscent of a Christmas card than any day in late February I can ever recall.

Speaking of the press I am already preparing myself for an onslaught from them in the near future. It seems that these days the private life of a celebrity isn't safe from hounding. The sandbags are out I'm afraid and let me tell you, I'm prepared to defend the secrets of the Surgery with my life.

It will come as no surprise to me that the general public are intrigued by my superstar lifestyle. There are some very racey stories to be found by those dedicated enough to dig deep, and I'm sure they would make far more

interesting reading than the various Whitehall members who seem hell bent on giving a whole new meaning to the 'Back to Basics' policy.

My reluctance to sell my story to the papers does not mean that it will be buried with me though. My autobiography, entitled 'Ooh, Matron!' is already well under way, and as soon as a publishing deal has been sewn up the whole world will be able to read and enjoy my exploits.

Undoubtedly I'll soon be appearing on quality shows such as Clive Anderson Talks Back, and even the popular youth culture programme The Word, to the purpose of increasing awareness of my masterpiece. I'm looking forward to meeting accomplished interviewer Terry Christian and the multi-talented Dani.

Apparently, to change the subject completely, we are in for a bit of a new look on the design side this month. The boys and girls at Europress never like to stand still and have decided that a change is as good as a rest. I know they are always interested in your opinions about how things look, so why not let me know what you think and I'll pass on your views.

As far as games go this month, there is only one that needs mentioning. It has taken up virtually all my time, all the time that hasn't been spent

attending wild rave parties that is, and quite possibly manages to receive the title of greatest game ever. It is of course, wait for it, 'Allo 'Allo Cartoon Fun from Alternative Software. Never has a game been able to craft such a level of enjoyment, excitement and appeal.

Actually, I'm lying. Obviously I'm talking about the magnificent Sim City 2000 from Maxis, although 'Allo 'Allo has many merits itself. I've seen so many haggard, unshaven, baggy-eyed addicts of '2000 that it is rumoured the government have plans to make it a class A drug. Until that time, users are free to become horribly reliant on this game, that takes the God game theme into previously un-entered realms of quality and enjoyment.

I urge everyone as strongly as I can to rush out and buy this game. In fact, if you don't I won't answer your queries in future and might even go incognito for a few weeks. Just kidding about that last bit - I don't discriminate.

Ah well, it is now time to fling open the Waiting Room's Wild West Saloon type swing doors and invite in some more eager participants. You never know what foul, disgusting problems lie through those glass panelled doors. ►

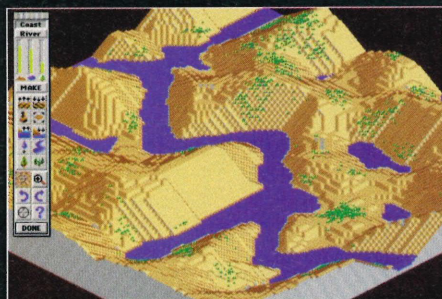




# the surgery

## Sim City 2000

Sim City 2000, a masterpiece of programming if ever I saw one. Obviously, the less gifted among you will undoubtedly struggle when you first attempt to get to grips with the game. Want some hints?



Choosing the right terrain is essential. Don't be afraid to fiddle with the Edit Map option



The key is really to be patient. Don't spend more than you can afford, and don't take out a bond



Water is a vital component to success. Get it flowing and the people will flood in

THE WAITING ROOM HAS UNDERGONE A FACELIFT THIS MONTH TO MAKE IT EASIER ON THE PATIENTS' EYES. DON'T WORRY THOUGH, THE ESSENTIALS ARE THE SAME, AND IT REMAINS A PLACE OF SALVATION FOR HAPLESS GAMESPLAYERS

## Eye of the Beholder II

I have just fought and finally beaten the dragon in Eye of the Beholder II. I have watched the light break over Darkmoon and witnessed the final destruction of the temple by Khelben's mages. It's a good end sequence.

However, there remain a couple of questions to which I seek answers. In the final tower where Dran resides, in a lower room with all the moving walls, there is a force field with a corridor turning left beyond it. I never worked out how to open this area.

Again in the final tower, just before going up the flight of stairs to confront Dran, a dying mage leaves a holy stone symbol. I did not encounter a portal in an area of the game accessible from this point. Perhaps having killed the dragon I've lost the motivation to apply my little grey cells sufficiently.

Finally, having battled through EOBI II, I am considering buying part III. Is it any good?  
G. Jefferies, Warrington

*I don't really know from your letter where you are stuck. I know you are in level one of the Crimson Tower, but I'm not sure which force wall you speak of.*

*There are two red disks on the wall in this area which cause force walls to appear and disappear, so I assume you are talking about those. If you spin both disks so that their notches are to the right one wall should disappear. Spinning the disks so the notches are down gets rid of another wall and finally spinning the disks so that both notches are up gets rid of the last wall.*

*I have searched out the maps for this game but cannot find the magic portal which needs a stone cross. A good piece of advice for would-be heroes though, is that upon arriving at the entrance to level two of the Crimson Tower have a rest before entering it. Resting your party inside the level causes extra mind flayers to be generated.*

*As for the third game, it took a bit of a hammering in the reviews, but personally I quite liked it and I'm sure you will too.*

Stop! Hold everything! Put those surgical instruments down and help me out quickly.

I'm stuck on Eye of the Beholder II. The Azure Tower to be precise, and level four of the tower to be even more precise than that. I have entered

the room with the four pressure pads and it is privvy to me that I must trap four Medusae herein, in order to open the exit door. However, I can only trap three at once before my Hold Monster spell wears off, although I have lots of other spells, and a sixth level Mage. I suspect I need the Flesh-to-stone spell (I have the Stone-to-flesh), but where, oh where, OH WHERE!! will I find it. If indeed I need it. Help me.

Greame Sawson, Simonstone, Lancs

*I assume you have retrieved the four polished shields after you used them to open the door into this infernal region, as they do help quite a bit.*

*The spell you refer to is found in the north-eastern corner of the level and the not so good news is that you'll find it immediately after you solve your current problem. This whole level is a mess of invisible pressure pads which put up walls and release monsters. I too struggled wildly with this predicament, and all I can do is tell you the order you should do things in.*

*Here goes. Standing at a central position the four plates are found at compass points N, S, E and W. Lure a monster to the North plate first. Now cast the hold spell and move quickly to close the doors. Repeat this for the other plates, making sure that the south plate is the last one you do. You need to move very quickly to make sure that you achieve this.*

## Lure of the Temptress

Having written to you before, I still have high hopes that you may be able to answer another one of my questions. I am stuck in the caves in Lure of the Temptress. Every time I try to get past the dragon guard I get killed no matter how many defend or attack moves I make.

Apart from this, I would also like some advice on what role-playing game I should get? I like the looks of most of them, but I haven't got a clue.  
Simon Holland, Ripon

*I recall that I too had trouble with that miserable specimen of a monster. There is no easy answer to your question. You've either got lightning reactions and split second timing like myself or you haven't.*

*As for advice on which RPG you should buy, this really isn't the place. Seeing as you asked me nicely though, I will make the effort. Personally,*





*my all time favourite traditional RPG has to be Wizardry VII – Crusaders of the Dark Savant, and I would recommend it to anybody. If however you want something a little more technically advanced, the thing to go for is definitely Origin's Ultima Underworld II. Take your pick, and I don't mean that gameshow presented by Des O'Connor, or was it Chris Tarrant?*

### Curse of Enchantia/Waxworks

You may not remember me, but I wrote to you fairly recently concerning my apparent lack of ability with graphic adventures, primarily Sam and Max Hit the Road. Well, I must have regained some of my brain, because I have managed to complete it now. There were two other games which I couldn't get very far with, and I'm hoping that instead of helping me with my original problem you could set me on the right path in either of them. I reiterate for your convenience:

In Curse of Enchantia I'm stuck under the sea with the rock crusher. I gave him all the rocks but I can't identify what he gave me in return. And I can't get the magnet or the reel of cotton.

In Waxworks I couldn't get anywhere with any of the waxworks except the pyramid, where I am stuck on the ground floor. I can't get past the wire or kill the crocodile or knock the prop down.

Please help with whichever game you know more about.

By the way, I still think your magazine is great, despite the fact that you never published my last letter. The Surgery alone puts it above the rest.  
**Mary Elby, Hants**

*Well Mary, I can only apologise for my oversight in neglecting to answer your previous correspondence. I assure you it is something that I try not to make a regular occurrence of.*

*Unfortunately, with the sheer volume of traffic that comes through the waiting room these days, some people are inevitably disappointed. Hopefully I can make amends now by answering both your problems.*

*For Curse of Enchantia, the item the rock monster gave you was a stick with a string on it. You must get the magnet and attach it to the stick/string combination, which you must then throw into the hole to get the reel of wire. To get the magnet you must get the computer, go to the room with the reel of wire, stand behind the plank and throw the computer. This should enable you to pick up the magnet. Problem solved.*

*Waxworks then. To get past the crocodile you must get the urn from level two. Lure the crocodile (it's an alligator actually) out of the water by breaking it in front of him, back up and throw a spear to finish him off. I cannot remember having any problems with a wire or a prop on the first floor, so I think you may be worrying over nothing.*

*I hope that has restored your faith in me, and if*

*you ever have any problems in the future don't hesitate to ask.*

### Captive

I doubt very much whether you are a real doctor, as you are unable to cure yourself of even a common cold, but it has to be said that your advice is good. So here goes...

In Captive (yes I know it's an old game, but you can help, I know you can), I am stuck in the base of planet Butre, the first planet. I have collected the probe, and I could blow up the base, but that would mean killing myself, which obviously isn't the desired effect! What do I do then?

**Simon Hulme-Davies, London W1**

*Once you have put the explosives on top of the generators you should hot foot it back to the entrance door because you only have a short time before the whole place explodes. In some of the early planets it's a good idea to lay a trail of objects leading to the exit or you'll never find the way out.*

*Later on you can buy a device which will guide you to the door. It should also be realised that the device works equally well outside, which will prove very useful when you can't even find the entrance. Having rushed to the exit, press one of the buttons on the door and then something naughty will happen. The door changes into a solid wall and I presume this is what is causing your problem.*

*The really difficult solution is to turn around. The game, has for some strange reason turned you around to face the opposite direction and the door you seek is behind you.*

### Monkey Island

Having spent my good money on US Gold's Monkey Island I am now in danger of causing much damage to my daughter's cat out of frustration and sheer annoyance. I think I'm doing well for a novice. I've got onto the boat, I've found the key hidden in the cereal packet, and not only that, but I've also opened the cabinet and found the note.

Now do I have to get into the cannon or what? I can fire the Cannon, but young Mr. Threepwood seems ever so reluctant to step inside. A doctor's task is to preserve life, albeit human. Please tell me what to do because I can neither vouch for my sanity or the safety of Penny (the cat).

**Geoff Miller, Stourport**

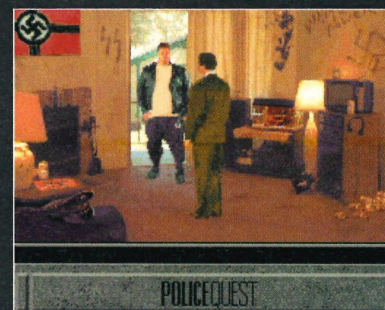
*But surely, I have answered this question before. What is wrong with you? Do you not regularly read the magazine? Obviously not, so I am forced to retread old ground.*

*The note you have found is a recipe which you must follow before you bother trying to escape from the ship. As you won't have the ingredients necessary for the recipe it looks like you're ►*

## SOLUTIONS

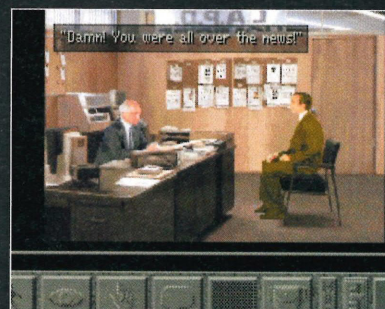
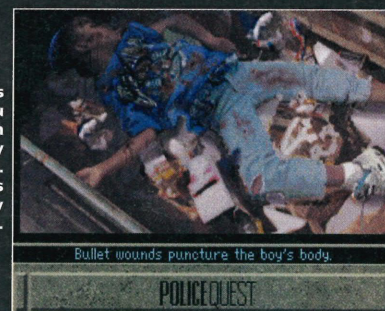
### Police Quest – Open Season

Many have criticised this game for being too precise in what it requires you to do to proceed. Personally, I like it a lot, and after all, if police weren't as meticulous as this we would be the first to complain. At least it's realistic



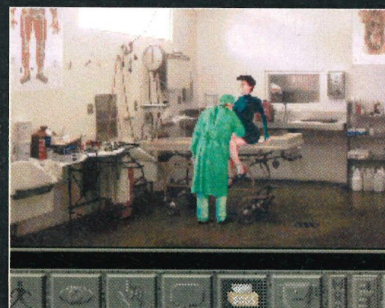
You must be careful in everything you do. Ensuring you haven't missed anything is vital

Don't play this game if you are squeamish or easily offended. Shots like this are pretty commonplace.



One thing you can guarantee is that if you make a mistake you will be severely punished

Trips to the lab may not be pleasant but they are an essential part of police work







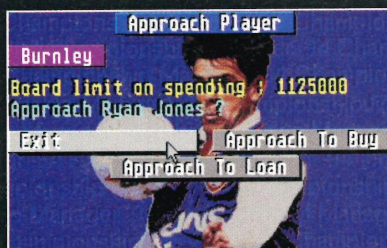
# the surgery

## Championship Manager

Currently my second favourite game, after Sim City of course, has to be this one. I have become so wrapped up in the fortunes and misfortunes of Burnley F.C. little else seems to matter to me anymore.

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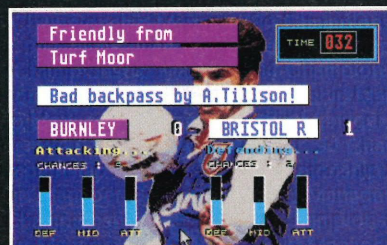
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STAMINA	11
SIDE	C
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A happy player is a successful one, but you have to draw the line somewhere



Even after the most careful preparation things can still go wrong. Still, it's a game of two halves I suppose

► going to have to improvise with some other bits and pieces. What you must use is: Cinnamon stick, Breath mint, Jolly Roger, Writing Ink, Fine Wine, Rubber Chicken, gunpowder and cereal. Use these ingredients in the pot and Guybrush will pass out. When he wakes up use the T-shirt on the flames under the pot then go and get some more gunpowder. Use the gunpowder with the cannon nozzle and then use the pot. Guybrush will automatically blast himself off the ship and onto the island.

## Monkey Island

I recently upgraded from an ST to a PC, and took it upon myself to 'get into' adventures, having previously only tried text affairs on the Spectrum. Monkey Island is well known, so off I went and bought it. I now find myself stuck close to the beginning, with the shopkeeper passing on the message that I must 'jump in the lake'. How then do I find the Swordmaster?

I realise this is probably very easy, but any advice for a long suffering damsel in distress would be very much appreciated.

Shirley Thomas, Altrincham

Have I accidentally entered a time warp here or what? Isn't this another problem that I have already answered? Maybe it's just a bit of the old déjà vu going on here.

I can only assume that you have taken some action that is holding you up from progressing in the game. You must stick Kate's leaflet on top of the wanted poster on Phatt Island, otherwise there is no way that she will be arrested.

I cannot understand why so many of you are having trouble at this particular part of the game. There is no obvious problem that I can see, but it could be just that my memory is failing me. If anybody knows what is going on, feel free to write in.

## Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade

A simple request that I'm sure you can cope with. In Indy and the Last Crusade I'm stuck in the castle. I'm not completely useless however: I can get the grey uniform, turn off the alarm, push the brick to get the trophy and I've even uncovered the vault behind the painting after much hard work, but I simply don't know how to get the combination. Also, if you aren't too busy, could you please let me know how to get past Biff, the Nazi. Thanks very much Doctor mate, chum, pal, buddy, best friend...

Steven Dowd, Bury St. Edmunds

WELL, THAT'S IT. ANOTHER MONTH HAS ROARED BY AND PLENTY OF PROBLEMS HAVE BEEN SOLVED. DON'T FORGET TO LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK OF THE NEW LOOK AND I'LL SEE YOU IN FOUR WEEKS TIME. THE SURGERY, PC ACTION, EUROPA HOUSE, ADLINGTON PARK, MACCLESFIELD, SK10 4NP.

I have a confession to make. I've forgotten the combination. I can tell you though that it is not essential to the completion of the game, but I don't suppose that helps too much does it?

I can tell you how to dispose of Biff though. Like most jobs, Biff thinks that having a few drinks makes him a better fighter. Take the trophy you found back to the kitchen and fill it with beer. Now offer the trophy to Biff and he'll drink the lot. One good punch will now dispose of him.

## Leisure Suit Larry 3

Old game, simple game, right? Wrong! For starters nothing seems to make an ounce of sense, and even when I do manage to struggle through a few screens, I always end up stuck again. What I need to know, is how do I get Patti past the pig in the jungle? Sort it please.

Russel Hartley, Glasgow

Once Patti gets across the chasm on the rope she will find some coconuts. Remove bra and put coconuts within. She can now throw the bra when the pig gets close. Short and sweet that one.

## Bard's Tale III

Hopefully you can get me out of a mess. I have been playing Bard's Tale III for a couple of months now and I was happily going through it when all of a sudden I came to an abrupt halt.

I am in Arboria (first world) and have killed Tsolatha Garnath with the spear from Valerian's tower. I took Garnath's head to the King and this gave me entrance to the sacred Grove. Here things went wrong and I can get no further. I found a small room with a door and a flickering flame, but I don't know what to do with it. Please help as I am desperate to get on with the game.

Glen Monrow, Glossop

You aren't that desperate to get on with a game now are you? Why don't you get a life other than games. That way you will be able to get a better grip on reality.

As well as separating Garnath from his head, you also need to rip out his heart (nice game). You also need the water of life from the Valarian Tower before you go any further. Use the APAR spell (-5, 4E) then travel South one move to Valeran (6N, 4E). Use the heart and then water with the canteen.

The next object of your desire is the bow and arrows of life, so move as follows: 1N, 1S, 1E, 1S, 2W, 1S, 4E, 1S, 2E. The objects are in the south-east corner (9N, 9E). Finally use the APAR spell to get out.



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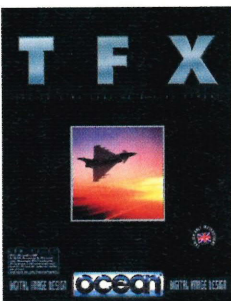
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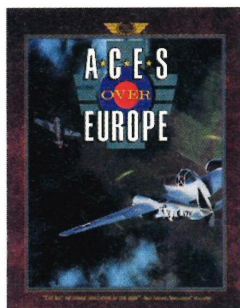
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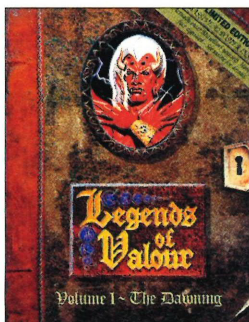
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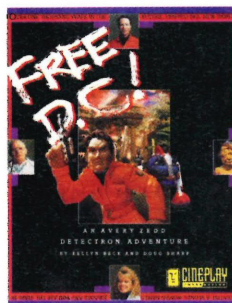
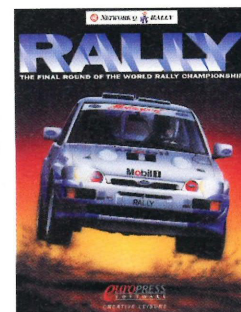
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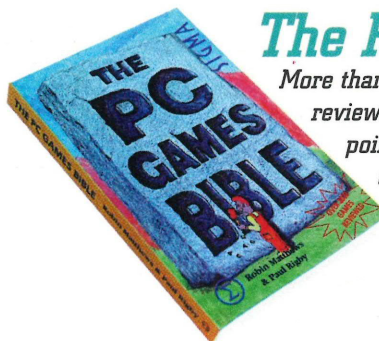


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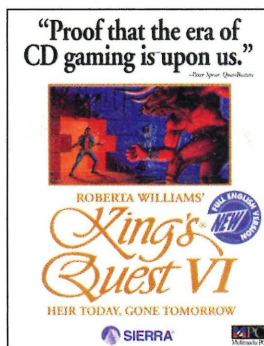
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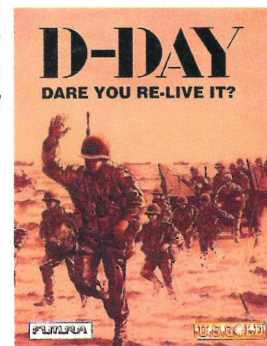
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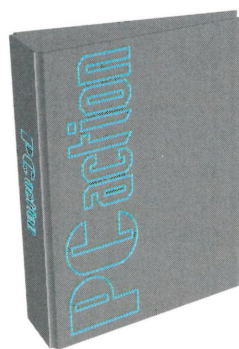
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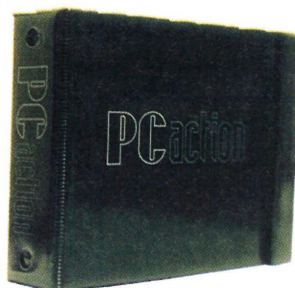
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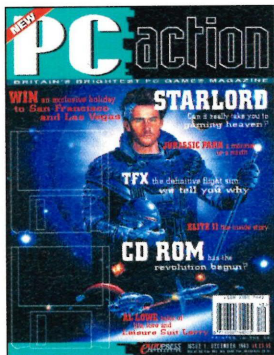
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**Coverdisks:** Starlord, Christmas Lemmings

**Reviews:** Starlord, Batman, Homeworld – Gateway II, TFX, Troddlers, Simon the Sorcerer, Gear Works, Jurassic Park, CyberRace, NHL Hockey, Dark Sun, SimFarm, Lost in Time, NFL Coaches Club Football, Seal Team

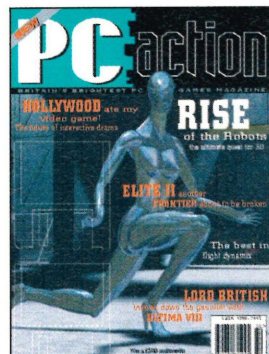
**Features:** CD-Rom Revolution, Digital Image Design (Inferno), Divide by Zero (Innocent Until Caught), and Cyro (Megarace)

**Issue 2** CODE 4502

**Coverdisks:** Pinball Dreams, Brutal Sports Football, Rally

**Reviews:** Frontier: Elite II, Shadow Caster, Nick Faldo's Championship Golf, The Ryder Cup, Kingmaker, Lilil Devil, Innocent Until Caught, Hired Guns, Air Combat Classics, Subwar 2050, The Blue and the Gray, Return to Zork, Dracula Unleashed

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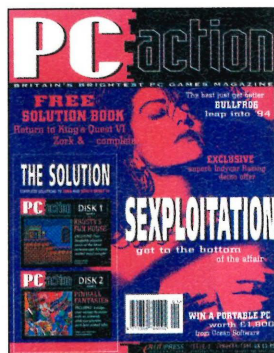


**Issue 3** CODE 4503

**Coverdisks:** Pinball Fantasies, Krusty's Funhouse, Solution Book for Return to Zork and King's Quest VI

**Reviews:** Sam and Max Hit the Road, Aces Over Europe, Krusty's Funhouse, Sid and Al's Incredible Toons, T2: The Arcade Game, Leisure Suit Larry 6, Fantasy Empire, Silverball, IndyCar Racing, Beneath a Steel Sky, Dungeon Hack, Magic Boy, Blues Brother: Juke Box Adventures, Goblins 3, Star Trek: Judgement Rites, Companions of Xanth, Tornado: Desert Storm, Syndicate: American Revolt, Fury of the Furies

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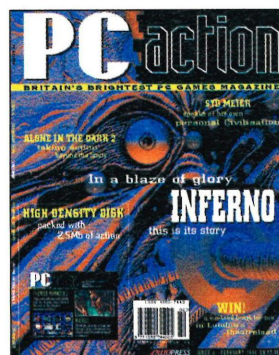


**Issue 4** CODE 4504

**Coverdisks:** Premier Manager 2, Wizard

**Reviews:** Alone in the Dark 2, Hand of Fate, Wizard, Unnatural Selection, Gabriel Knight, Pinball Fantasies, Fire and Ice, Bridge, Cosmic Spacehead, Micro Machines, Flight Sim Toolkit, Police Quest IV – Open Season, Campaign II, Quest for Glory IV, Premier Manager II, Kings Table, Oceans Below, Journeyman Project, Inca II

**Features:** The Making of Inferno by D.I.D/Ocean, Delphine Software, Imagitec and profile of Sid Meier



**Issue 5** CODE 4502

**Coverdisk:** Detroit

**Reviews:** SimCity 2000, Doom, In Extremis, Civilisation for Windows, Championship Manager for Windows, Lamborghini, Reunion, Nomad, Mortal Kombat, Daemonsgate, Unnecessary Roughness, Armaeth, Archon Ultra, Chessmaster 4000

**Features:** Las Vegas Winter Consumer Electronics show, Making an Impression (Impressions), Moon's the limit (Under a Killing Moon), Faster than the human eye (Delta V), Captain Sensible (Sensible Software), Cyberspace the final frontier, Godspell (religious software)

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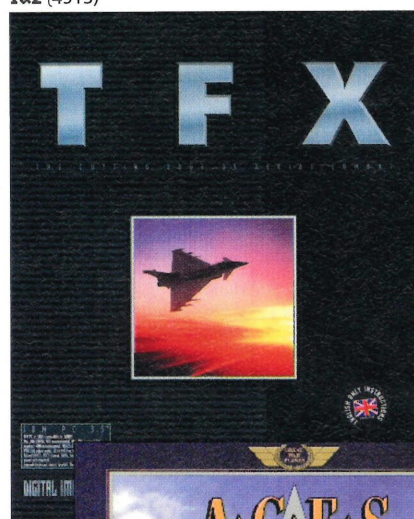




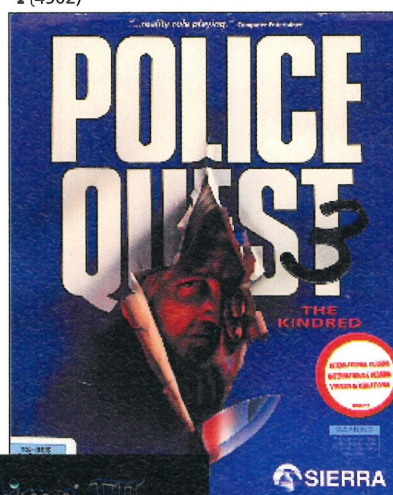
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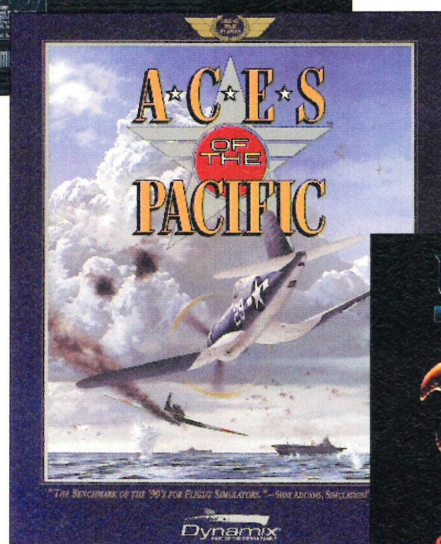
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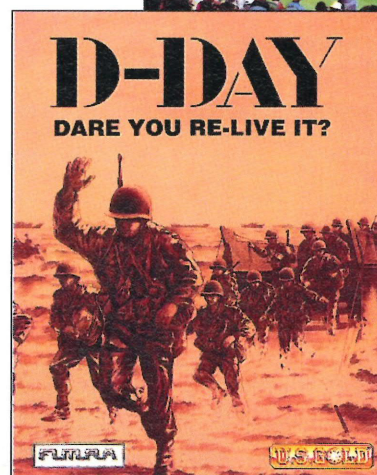
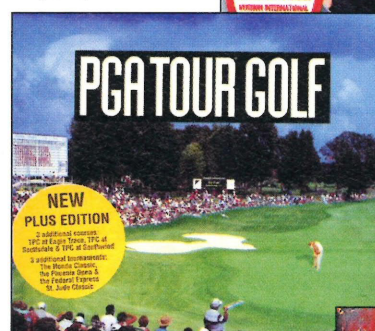


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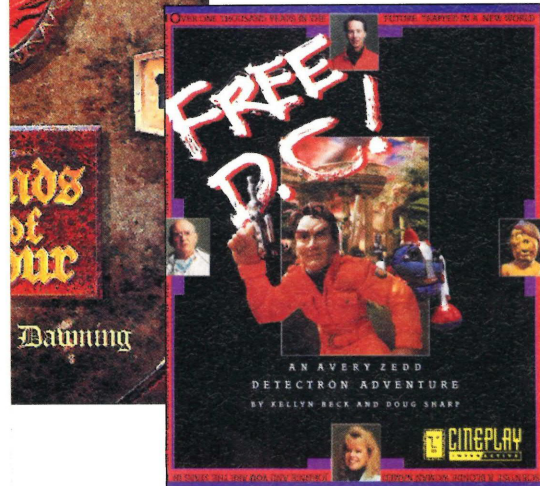
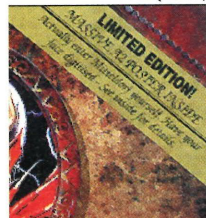
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Alone in the Dark 5	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 12	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 6	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 13	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 7	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 14	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 8	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 15	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 9	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 16	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 10	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 17	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 11	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 18	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 12	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 19	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 13	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 20	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 14	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 21	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 15	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 22	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 16	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 23	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 17	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 24	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 18	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 25	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 19	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 26	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 20	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 27	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 21	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 28	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 22	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 29	9.99			
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Alone in the Dark 24	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 31	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 25	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 32	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 26	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 33	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 27	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 34	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 28	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 35	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 29	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 36	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 30	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 37	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 31	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 38	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 32	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 39	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 33	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 40	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 34	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 41	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 35	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 42	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 36	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 43	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 37	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 44	9.99			
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Alone in the Dark 40	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 47	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 41	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 48	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 42	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 49	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 43	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 50	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 44	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 51	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 45	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 52	9.99			
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Alone in the Dark 47	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 54	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 48	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 55	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 49	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 56	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 50	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 57	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 51	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 58	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 52	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 59	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 53	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 60	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 54	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 61	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 55	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 62	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 56	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 63	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 57	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 64	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 58	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 65	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 59	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 66	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 60	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 67	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 61	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 68	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 62	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 69	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 63	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 70	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 64	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 71	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 65	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 72	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 66	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 73	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 67	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 74	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 68	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 75	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 69	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 76	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 70	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 77	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 71	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 78	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 72	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 79	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 73	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 80	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 74	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 81	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 75	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 82	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 76	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 83	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 77	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 84	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 78	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA)	15.99	Shadow of the Comet	CD ROM 29.99	Wing Commander II Special Ops 85	9.99			
Alone in the Dark 79	29.99	Evil Geniuses	19.99	Links Innisbrook (SVGA								



# network

Questions, questions, questions. We all need to know the answer to questions at sometime or another. Perhaps the answers we've had in the past appear to be one-sided, so if you want an unbiased opinion, write to Tony Kaye at PC Action, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NP. Please remember that although we try to answer every letter, we cannot guarantee a personal reply.

## I wanna be...

I am studying computers at college, but they only use Windows-based applications and games are virtually ignored. This leaves me with a problem and that is that I want to be a programmer.

It has always been an ambition of mine to create some of the great games that are comparable to those appearing on the PC now, even more than on my current computer, an Amiga. I realise, obviously, that the future lies in the PC and I'm currently trying to sell my machine so that I can buy a 486.

What I really need to know is the following:

1. Are PC games written in C or Assembly Language and which should I buy? Is there a cheap package available?
  2. How are the graphics created and do I need another package for these?
  3. Can you recommend any good books that I should read to learn more about PC hardware, software and games?
  4. Can you show how a game is programmed from start to finish?
- When I spoke to the careers officer at college, she told me to forget it, but I really want to do this. Can you help?

Stuart Frost, Southampton, Hants

Well Stuart, yours is a representative of many letters received in the office from hopeful programmers. Most people do not realise the skill and talent involved in producing a commercially viable game.

Before you can even think about applying for a job in this field, you need to be a competent programmer. The only way to learn is to buy a language package and start creating simple games yourself. These should ideally be released as public domain or shareware and judged by the users. If you get a lot of positive responses and have an

idea for a potential hit, then the software houses may listen to you if you can convince them that it will make them money, but only if you can show them your abilities.

I can't tell you which package to buy, but most games are written in either C or Assembly Language. Neither of these are easy to learn and they both suggest that a working knowledge of the structure of programming is known before you even

progress to them. Try learning a relatively simple language like Basic before you consider going any further. You may find that you don't want to go any further.

A good range of books are available at your local library. Have a look and see which make sense to

you and which just confuse you even more. You can then decide which ones are really worth investing in.

Again, graphics are created with a variety of different packages, so it is hard to pick one for you. You need to be a very good computer artist to design and produce games, so it may be wise

to try to find someone else to handle this side of things for you. The same is true for the music and sound effects. Successful games are usually the work of teams of programmers and not just one person on his or her own.

Showing the formation of a game from start to finish is difficult as this is likely to be protected by the software developers themselves. Many create their own tools, like the SCUMM system from LucasArts, and will not let the world know how it's done.

I'm sorry to appear a little negative, but in

most cases, the careers officer is right. Some do make it into programming, but a lot more are well known in the shareware and PD world as those who tried.

I hope you and all of the people like you who write to me make the right decision, and if you do try, I wish you the best of luck. Remember, though, very few programmers, even successful ones, drive around in Ferraris and earn millions.

## RAM with a view

Thank you for a great magazine. I read it from cover to cover every month. Grovelling over, can you help me with a memory problem?

My machine, a Tandon 486, has four megabytes of memory and I have since acquired another four megs. When I put them in the machine, I get a configuration error and can't use the extra memory. In fact, the machine won't run at all unless I take the extra away again. I am still running the computer with the original memory.

I checked the SIMM chips and they are 70ns, which I believe are fast enough. So what it is that I am doing wrong?

Sam Whiting, Huddersfield, South Yorkshire

This appears to be a simple enough problem to sort out, Sam. All you need to do is adjust your configuration files which I will now explain how to go about doing.

When you boot up your machine, a message appears telling you to hit delete to enter setup. Do this and a series of menus will then appear (assuming that you are using AMIBIOS, which should be standard in the Tandon).

Now find the menu that deals with memory and simply double the figure you find there. Save this and reboot your computer and it should recognise, test and use all eight megabytes of RAM.

'Successful games are usually the work of teams of programmers'

'Most games are written in either C or Assembly language'



# network

At last this is your opportunity to make your mark by speaking your mind. If you have a point of view that you want to make known, then do it here within these pages. It is time to put pen to paper and write to us here at: Network Opinions, PC Action, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NP. Remember there's £50 on offer for the best letter that we receive

## actor looking for pc action

Now that software companies are using digitised images of live actors, have you any idea as to how to come by this type of work? I am an actor and would love to appear in a game, but I have no idea who to contact at the software houses as none of them advertise for actors. Is most of this type of work based in the U.S. or are some British based companies starting to use live actors?

Most of the people used in Return to Zork were 'names' (Sam Whatsisname from Flash Gordon for instance). Can they command Hollywood style fees or is it the basic Equity minimum?

L. Olivier, London

I'm afraid Mr Olivier, (or is it Lawrence?), that we can't help you on that one. Direct contact with the software production company is your best bet here and going off your past work you would be a welcome addition to an industry sadly lacking in any acting ability.

## upgrade or suffer?

I have had my IBM 386SX for nearly a year now and have so far been fairly happy with its performance. It came with a very basic spec and I have since upgraded the memory to 4MB and added a Soundblaster Pro. Even though in real terms this machine is still fairly recent, compared with the level of advancement in current software development it is fast becoming a real dinosaur.

With the recent CD-Rom revolution I am very worried about being left behind as my machine has no room for an internal CD-Rom drive and the external kits are still quite expensive. Adding to this that some of the latest and indeed best software releases are for CD

only, I am starting to seriously miss out. What should I do?

Ditch my machine whilst it still has some use and upgrade, even though it may cost an arm, a leg and a torso, or bide my time, wait for it to become a very expensive paperweight and then buy myself a state of the art Pentium?

J. Billings, Essex

Well it does all depend on the speed of your SX too you know. If it's a 33 Mhz machine then some software is still going to run fairly well as long it's not the type that moves huge amounts of texture mapped polygons around a 3D light sourced environment. But you're right. If you don't upgrade fairly soon you are indeed going to be left behind as PC games become more and more hardware intensive. The best example being

Origin, recommending DX2 machines for some of their up and coming releases like BioForge.

CD-Rom hasn't made a huge impact on gamers and 'The' title to own still has not raised its head, so an upgrade to a 486 is your priority before the investment of a CD drive. As for the Pentium, well, for the price vs performance value the 486 DX machines are going to be around for a while yet.

## costly conversions

Is it fair to say that certain games are better suited to certain formats? It seems that games like Street Fighter 2 and Mortal Kombat simply do not work on the PC, running as they do, so painfully slow. These conversions seem to have been done almost as an afterthought and one would think that

software houses who release them would give more thought to the way they will run considering how much we are asked to pay for them.

Maybe these games do not run because they are conversions and publishers and developers should concentrate on developing games like this specifically for the PC.

M. Browne, Dukinfield

The marketing and hype behind such titles is

enormous and sometimes games publishers tend to rely on the game's reputation as an arcade machine to sell their respective conversion. The two beat 'em-ups you have mentioned converted brilliantly to console platforms but couldn't come up to expectations on the PC. This leads to the

question, how can a £1500 486 PC not match the speed and playability of a £100 Super Nintendo?

Well the SNES is packed with custom graphic chips that are specifically designed to handle graphic intensive games and nothing else. There are so many different PC configurations that

obviously a game is going to look and perform better on a Local Bus 486 than it is on a 386SX but arcade jaunts have to be carefully programmed because the PC isn't designed for fast paced pixel moving action.

But who cares, why play dodgy arcade conversions when you can play the real thing. Doom for example? Guaranteed the SNES couldn't even touch us on that score. Just check out their version of Wolfenstein to see what we mean, while our review of it in the last issue said it all.



This may look like a rather inoffensive grey box, but the SNES can't half shift those sprites

**'How can it be that an accident in Japan can affect the prices of our hardware?'**

## shovelware

Now that the CD is here we are seeing a lot of so-called compilation disks being released with some very old games on them. Though these games seem to be considerably cheaper than when they first came out, they are so old that no-one but a nostalgia freak should by rights be even slightly interested in them.

Let's see the software houses concentrate on exploiting the capacity of the CD with newer and better games and consign

these ancient games to the museum in which they so obviously belong.

J. O'Donoghue, Denton

Quite right sir. The PC was never much of a games machine until the last few years and 10 year old text adventures were just about the best you could get. The CD is indeed a huge storage medium and should offer more than ancient, often unplayable games.

Having said that they still don't seem to have found a niche regarding the perfect CD game style. The so called interactive FMV movies so far have been very shoddy, giving us nothing but poor interaction and terrible A-Team style action and acting. We'll have to wait for the new titles before it can be really judged, but up to now there aren't many games to tempt any one to invest their money in CD technology.

## chip resin anyone?

I recently purchased a RAM upgrade for my PC and was told that because of a fire at some Japanese factory my SIMM chips were more expensive than they had been. How can it be that an accident in Japan can affect the prices of our hardware and ▶

Opinions



► indeed cause what the salesman described as a 'worldwide RAM shortage'?

*J. Berlyne, London*

Well Mr Shopkeeper was right. That fire in Japan has indeed resulted in a worldwide RAM shortage. The reason being is that the factory was responsible for the manufacturing of two thirds of the world's chip resin, which surprisingly enough you need to make chips. The result is a 100% price increase and a lot of irate PC owners.

Hopefully the price should come back down to a reasonable level within a few months. But there again it could be a bit like petrol prices during the Gulf War, they shot up but never came back down because it too, is a bit of a necessity. **PCW**

## low/high density

Ref: Pinball Fantasies

I agreed with your reviewer that having played 'Partyland' which was supplied as one of your coverdisks with Issue 3 of your 'PC Action' magazine, that this was an excellent pinball game.

Imagine my dismay, when I received a reply to a letter sent to the publisher, 21st Century Entertainment Ltd, that when it is available, around mid-February, it will only be supplied on high density disks.

The reason for writing to you, is to ask, if you could ensure that when supplying demo disks, that

you mention whether the final product will be available on low or high density disks or either.

I cannot imagine why 21st Century Entertainment should issue a demo on low density disk, which meant that people, with high density disks could not play and assess its value, but could purchase the final product, while those people with low density disk systems could play the demo but cannot purchase the finished product? Perhaps you could explain the logic?

*P.J. Shaw, Berkshire*

In fact the decision on cover disk mounts lies with ourselves and not with 21st Century entertainment. The reason is price and disk space.

About 95 per cent of PC games are on high density disks and rightly so seeing that 95 per cent of PCs have high density disk drives. If you have a high density drive then you can use both high and low density disks, but if you have a low density drive then you are going to be stuck.

For the price of a high density drive (approximately £30 + VAT) and for convenience sake it's a good investment and can be quite easily fitted yourself with a screwdriver and 15 minutes to spare. In the meantime ask software companies about disk transfers, some exchange 3.5" disks for 5.25" for example. Give them a call before you part with your money. **PCW**

## where did you get that mouse?

Re: Q&A question bit Samantha Lewis, Oxford, in PCA Issue 3.

I hereby would like to answer the question in your Q&A section, by Samantha Lewis from Oxford, who would like to know about the mouse.

The mouse was developed as early as 1963, by a chap called Doug Engelbart, who worked for the Stanford Research Institute at that time, to be used by his Augment computer.

He first designed a wooden prototype, a simple analog device that responded to each movement of the mouse by sending a signal to the software that shifted the position of the cursor on the screen. Inside the wooden box were two metal wheels, that were connected to the shafts of two variable resistors.

The concept became more widely known, when Jack S. Hawley built the first digital mouse, to be used by the powerful Alto computer of the Xerox Corporation's Palo Alto Research Centre. After his mission for Xerox, Hawley went on to design and manufacture mice through his own company, the Mouse House in Berkeley.

Charles Simonyi, who joined Microsoft, wanted to add mouse support for the product Microsoft Word. Also Bill Gates, Paul Allen and Raleigh Roark were exploring ideas for hardware products.

Microsoft asked David Strong, a Seattle graphic designer, who designed Microsoft's logo, for assistance with the mouse design. He developed a clay model, with thumbtacks underneath for smooth gliding. Roark took the model with him to Tokyo, to Kay Nishi, Microsoft's Japanese VP and president of the ASCII-Corporation in Japan. After having said, that it couldn't be done, the

Japanese engineers went to work and produced a workable design. A few months later, Microsoft had its first mouse.

The Bus mouse was developed in 1983, after that came the Serial mouse, that could be connected directly to an RS-232 serial port. If anyone wants any more information about the mouse there is an excellent book called Microsoft Mouse Programmer's Reference, issued by Microsoft Press and priced at £25.95.

Keep up the good work with PCA.

*Frits W. Hoogendoorn, Holland*

Who'd have guessed that the humble mouse could have had such a history. Thanks for that insight into mousey history Mr Hoogendoorn. **PCW**

## sex and drugs and rock and roll...

As a member of CommUnity's Media Team I have had passed on to me your 'Sexploitation' article, which appeared in your January 1994 issue.

CommUnity was set up last year in order to work to protect and promote the interests and civil liberties of computer-comms users in the UK, and in particular to address the negative way in which comms services – such as Bulletin Boards (BBSs) – are generally depicted in the press and media.

Though your article makes many worthy points about the proliferation of sexually-explicit material via computers, it also specifically mentions BBSs a number of times in a way which could be construed as encouraging in the reader the belief that Bulletin Boards exist primarily – or even exclusively – as sources of pornography. This is not the case.

Though CommUnity's ethos is one of advocacy of comms and the Net community, we are realistic enough to admit the both pornography and pirated software can be transmitted by modem. What we refute is that public misconception that this activity is widespread in comparison to the perfectly legal, and socially-positive work done by the vast majority of Systems Operators. Those Sysops running non-commercial hobbyist BBSs, for example, keep their systems online entirely at their own expense, and in the Net spirit of support, sharing and the freedom of information.

I hope you will agree that it would be tragic if all of this effort and commitment were to be swept aside in a wave of misinformation, which could easily result in heavy-handed legislation affecting the freedom of computer users to communicate across the Net. Computer-comms is growing apace, and offers a future of almost boundless possibilities. Isn't it essential that it should not be hamstrung by legislation driven by hysteria and technophobia? This being the case, CommUnity is prevailing upon magazines such as PC Action to ensure balance in its reporting of stories which feature the modem-using community.

*Malcolm Arnold, CommUnity Media Team*



No, computer pornography isn't two little Mario type characters copulating, it's frighteningly real stuff

## Q&A

**Q: Why is it that mail order game companies can sell games at vastly reduced prices compared to the high street shops? It baffles me to think that people shell out £50 for a game when the same thing could be bought for £28 from a mail order firm.**

**A: The biggest contributing factor to the price of a game is the 'middle man'. On top of production and developers' costs, there are also distribution, storage, retailer and shopkeeping costs; lights, rent etc. and other such business expenditures that are far too boring to go into. So basically mail order firms send you exactly the same game as you would buy in the shop but without having to pile on all the running costs associated with distribution and shop upkeep. As to why people spend more for a game from a shop is just a matter of personal preference.**

**Q: I play games on my PC and use it for nothing else. Recently my hard disk was infected by a virus from Hungary. Luckily a friend sorted out the tangled mess, but can you suggest any virus killers I could pick up cheaply to avoid such disasters in the future?**

**A: If money is your key concern then there are many shareware virus killers available that should suffice for the use you'd be putting them to. Each killer behaves differently and make sure you read the on-disk manual before you use it to avoid any complications. Registering your new killer will also guarantee updates to combat the ever growing army of new viruses.**



# PC GAMES A R C h I V e

**I**f it's lasting playability you value in your games, then sports sim street is where you should be living. In this comprehensive comparison of the top sports sims, we line up tennis and golf, football and rugby and separate them out, bogeys from holes in one, aces from double faults and hat-tricks from home goals. Whether you're an armchair enthusiast or a sports hero, you'll need this guide to find your way around the course.

## G O L F

### 1. LINKS 386 PRO

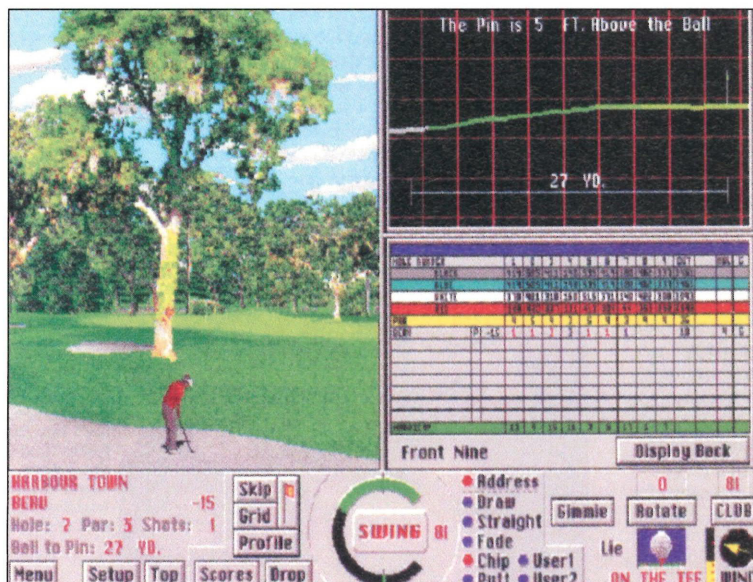
Links is the biggest name in the PC golfing field, and 386 PRO is basically a super VGA enhanced version, designed with the more powerful PCs in mind. The game comes with one course, Harbour Town, and there are a host of others available – Banff, Mauna Kea, and Innisbrook, and other more famous names, The Belfry, Pinehurst and Pebble Beach – the list is endless.

All these courses are depicted in glorious SVGA, and playing them seems as challenging as tackling their real life counterparts. The downside to this is the cost of the extra courses each on top of the price of the game, as they aren't cheap by any means.

Visually, 386 PRO is something of a treat, although to turn on all the detail requires eight MB of RAM. Otherwise the program runs very slowly. However, the real issue at stake is how it plays. From changing minor detail such as the exact stance that your golfer is using, to panning out an impressive overhead view of the current hole, 386 PRO presents you with more than a few options. Replays of particularly striking shots can be viewed from both forward and reverse angles, and all the standard little golfing 'cheats' are included, such as mulligans (re-taking a shot).

Golfing skill is implemented with the standard power-meter gauge. Holding down the button starts the meter increasing towards 100%, and releasing determines shot power. A second press of the button is used to simulate hook and slice. Links 386 PRO combines graphical splendour with a challenging golf engine and is something of a must for the golfing fan.

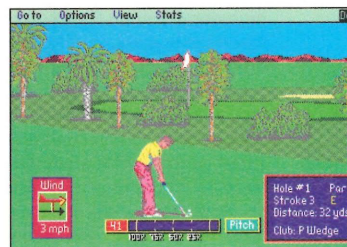
US GOLD



### 2. PGA TOUR GOLF

Much like Links, this is a veteran of the golfing world and it was very well received when it was first released on the Amiga. One of the most innovative features of the game is the competitive element. Some 70 odd professional golfers, ranging from Azinger to Zoeller, are represented, giving the tournaments a really authentic atmosphere. Prize money can be acquired throughout the various competitions and the program keeps track of the biggest money winners.

Maybe this doesn't sound particularly thrilling, but it does add an extra dimension to the long term appeal of PGA. Controls are much the same as any other golfing sim, with the usual



power-meter, and hook/slice features. One deviation from the standard formula is the over hit option. This means that you can really whack the ball with 110% power, but if the hook/slice snap is not timed with absolute precision, cries of 'fore!' will be echoing down the fairway.

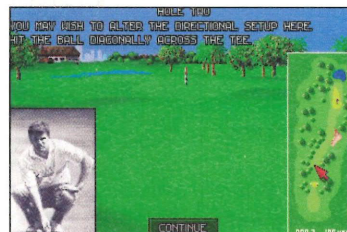
Graphically, PGA is below par – the Amiga version looked a lot sharper and also sounded 10 times better. PGA tortures the unwitting PC gamer with a crude selection of internal beeps, with no sound card options available. These deficiencies annoy, but on the whole this is a solid enough game.

ELECTRONIC ARTS

### 3. NICK FALDO'S CHAMPIONSHIP GOLF

Quite recently released, Grand Slam's big name licence was something of a disappointment. Great things were expected, and indeed the game looks very good, but it plays very poorly. So runs the age old adage – 'good graphics maketh not a good game'.

The control system utilised in Faldo's golf is more complicated than the universally accepted standard power-meter. Power level is set before you take the shot, and the actual skill only comes in the form of adding extra power to the shot using wrist snap, and getting the ball to fly straight via the hook/slice zone, which has to be



double clicked on. This is not easy by any stretch of the imagination – in fact the difficulty level of some shots borders on the downright frustrating.

Putting is implemented very badly, with it being nigh-on impossible to see the intricacies of the greens clearly, resulting in a pot-luck feel to this section of the game. This is where Faldo is really let down. Yes, the graphics are very nice, but not as good as Links 386 PRO and the gameplay is an inexcusable failure.

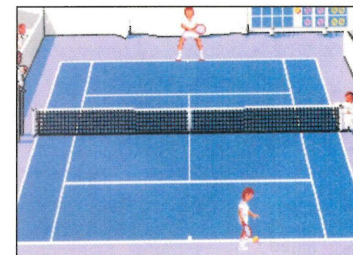
GRANDSLAM

## T E N N I S

### 1. GREAT COURTS 2

Originally released on the Amiga many moons ago under the title Pro Tennis Tour, this was a big hit and is still a very sharp looking game, while losing nothing in the PC conversion. Perhaps the most important aspect to mention is the difficulty level of the game – it's a case of difficult to begin with and bloody impossible to master. However, this doesn't prevent the game from being both enjoyable and addictive.

At the beginning of the game, there is an option to change your player's stats. All the different tennis shots (eg. backhand volley, lob, etc) have to be



allocated a certain number of 'skill' points. Of course, if you decide to have a brilliant service, you will have to go short on points in another area. Your opposition are documented in a similar manner, so you can attempt to exploit their weaknesses.

Play can be held over an entire season, with all four major Grand Slam tournaments and a huge number of less grandiose events simulated. Games are held on four different surfaces, which do actually make a difference to the way the ball travels and bounces. It is this depth, combined with fast paced, adrenaline pumping gameplay, that makes Great Courts 2 a winner. Perseverance is required to become good at the game, although when playing doubles the difficulty level is somewhat lessened.

UBISOFT

### 2. ADVANTAGE TENNIS (CD-ROM)

In a very similar vein to Great Courts, the most noticeable difference between the two is the speed of the gameplay. Advantage plays very, very



# SPORTS SIMULATORS



quickly and requires a little less timing when hitting the ball, which generates the feeling of an arcade game.

This is no bad thing, it all depends on your preference. Aside from this, the song remains the same. There are a number of different tournaments dotted about the world that can be played on three different surfaces, battling to become the number one seed in the world of tennis.

Only the shot selection system in Advantage deviates from the Great Courts formula. Instead of allocating skill points, you actually get the chance to choose which shots you can perform. For example, you can choose huge dives, trick shots, and determine whether your backhand will be one or two handed.

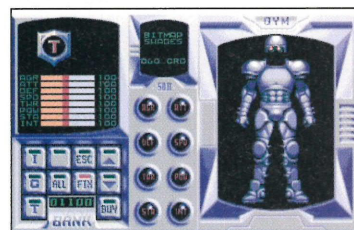
Infogrames usually produce fairly solid stuff, and this is certainly no exception. It is a playable and enjoyable game – arcade freaks may well even prefer it to Great Courts because of the actually pace of the action.

**INFOGRAMS**

## FUTURE SPORTS FOOTBALL

### 1. SPEEDBALL 2

Renowned for their uncompromising Rollerball-style violence, future sports all stick to a similar script of moral deterioration and the need to let loose



all that pent-up frustration on the sports field. Who knows, it could become reality if Gladiators is anything to go by.

Still, there's more in this particular fantasy league (but incredibly enjoyable) than the wholesale slaughter of anything that moves. Manoeuvring your players presents quite a challenge and it takes a while to get the hang of the pop-up 3D presentation. Power-ups are in plentiful supply and actually add to the gameplay, enabling you to move faster and make your goals count for more. The background is better fleshed out too. Your team plays in a macho league

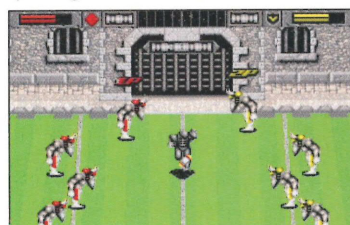
where you take on a management role and in training sequences you can improve your players' capabilities with armour and special weapons.

Once kitted out, the top players look rather like Cybermen and fit in perfectly with the metallic feel of the pitch and hard clunk of the ball. It's a hugely addictive set-up that has you coming back for more punishment time and again because it relies less on novelty value and more on smooth, seductive gameplay.

**KIXX XL**

### 2. BRUTAL SPORTS FOOTBALL

If these are the sports of the future, then heaven help our lauded sportsmen. This game owes more to ice hockey than football and borrows its sporting violence from the British



Bulldog school of tackling. So much blood and guts would horrify the film censors. Brutal Sports Football is certainly the best word for it, the football/rugby style of contest taking second place to the loutish violence, which is positively encouraged and the only way to win.

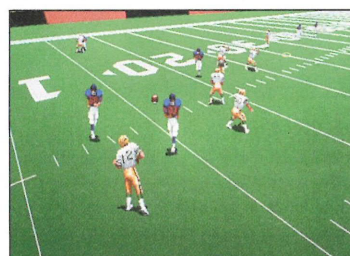
Picking up swords, grenades and thunderbolts, your muscle-men monsters advance down a small pitch to a goal that resembles a hearth. Castle-like fortifications are bricked in around the pitch, but the look of the piece is let down by the blobby pixelated characters. A scrum becomes a scrawl on the screen and the delicate slaughtering of the opposition a splodge of red.

**MILLENNIUM**

## AMERICAN FOOTBALL

### 1. UNNECESSARY ROUGHNESS

The latest addition to the huddle of PC American Football sims, Accolade's blend of impressive rotoscoped 3-D animation and extensive features



scores highly in all departments.

Features include pre-set playbooks, play designers, team editors – all the authentic 1993 players are included.

Statistical options are not neglected – in fact everything is here, and the only real failing is the running commentary of the game, which is badly constructed. The play selection menu is extremely well designed and easy to use, with the plays clearly documented and easily selectable.

As a result, real time play calling (against the 45 second clock) is thus made an enjoyable test of quick thinking under pressure, rather than a frustrating chore.

A variety of formations and plays are available in the default playbooks, and the more advanced coaches amongst you can actually design a full set of plays yourselves.

Out on the field, the action is controllable via three different skill levels. On the basic level the computer opposition is toned down, but the intermediate and difficulty levels remove this privilege, along with making the wide receivers your responsibility on passing downs.

Advanced play removes the pause feature present on the lower levels, putting the action into real time so you cannot sedately view your choice of receivers. This automatic pause feature on the lower levels is possibly the most useful tool for the novice player because it stops play so you can freely view the defensive pass coverage.

Actual gameplay is the real strength of Unnecessary Roughness. With an infinite number of camera angles to use, bone crunching tackles are all the more effective. On a 486 the graphics are highly impressive and the simulation engine replicates the sport highly accurately.

On the whole, this is a well thought out sports package and something of a must buy if you are even remotely interested in anything at all to do with US Football.

**ACCOLADE**

### 2. FRONT PAGE SPORTS FOOTBALL

Quite an old game, but recently revised to include authentic player names along with minor improvements across the board, and re-released under the title of FPS Football Pro. Prominent characteristics include extensive trade and drafting options, as well as the facility to play multiple seasons, and thus nurture and develop your team over a lengthy period of time.

On-field graphics are detailed, and the players move and block very realistically – although a 486 is really necessary, as the animation tends to be quite jerky on a lower spec machine. An extensive play designer is also included, which literally allows total freedom, and although this does take quite a bit of getting used to it is one

of the game's strongest points.

Criticism has been levelled at FPS for being too slow in resolving computer versus computer games, and it is true that it can take three quarters of an hour to play a week's worth of matches – and this is on a 486 DX.

This can certainly be a major inconvenience, but at least it shows an element of authenticity in that you are sure the computer is working out bona fide results, play by play and not just generating a few random numbers.

On the whole, this is highly stimulating gridiron action, if you can cope with the long term aspect of the program. This is really one for the dedicated fans out there.

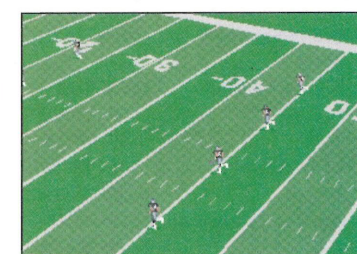
**DYNAMIX**

### 3. COACHES CLUB FOOTBALL

Another veteran quarterback in this division and certainly no lightweight. Microprose's effort offers a heady mix of both arcade action and coaching skill. Boasting authentic player names, team colours and the like, Coaches Club Football is quite an impressive package, but unfortunately falls down in one major area – namely realism.

Strengths of the game include the team editor, which is both detailed and user friendly. Via this option you can create an infinite number of teams, not to mention alternative coaching styles.

However, the quality MicroProse image is somewhat stained by a rather clumsy play calling interface and the quality of the actual play resolution itself. The major fault in the gameplay



lies with the simulation of the offensive line. On running plays the blocking just doesn't seem to function correctly, and on passing downs the amount of sacks generated seems inordinately high.

Graphically, the field is somewhat lacking in detail, and the players themselves, whilst generally sound, tend to look somewhat out of sorts when moving.

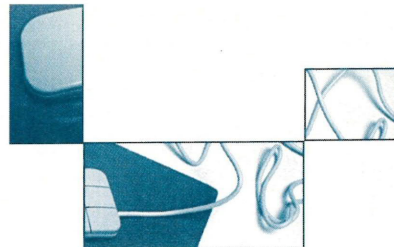
Some of this criticism may seem to be extremely vague, and to a certain extent it may be, but Coaches Club Football just doesn't seem to evoke the atmosphere of the gridiron with that much effectiveness.

Having said this, it is rare for MicroProse to produce a real turkey and this is indeed the case here. On the whole, it's quite good, but it isn't really on the same level as the other competition that is around.

**MICROPROSE**



# catalog



**EVERY MONTH PC ACTION OFFERS YOU ALL THE NAMES, NUMBERS AND MISCELLANEOUS NUGGETS NECESSARY TO KEEP YOU PLUGGED IN AND KEYED UP ON THE LATEST GOINGS ON PC-WISE. AND YOUR VERY OWN INSTANT CONTACT LIST – JUST ADD TELEPHONE AND DIAL – COMES WITH A GUARANTEE TO KEEP THIS INFORMATION UPDATED MONTH BY MONTH.**

## public domain (p.d.)

Welcome to the world of PD, a world in which utilities, applications, demos and games are available at an affordable price. PD disks vary in price from just £1 to £10. For a full list of available PD and shareware software contact these companies:

Advantage	0242 224340
Argent Shareware	0603 812888
Benetech Systems	0533 600033
Data Soft	031 5565322
EC Software	0484 460070
Links PD & Shareware	0706 360676
Magnetic Fields	0706 360676
Metric Computers	0705 827943
Nildram Software	0442 891331
Omicron Systems	0702 710391
PCIUG	0732 771512
PCL Software Ltd	0332 678713
PC Gold	0602 390973
PDSL	0892 663298
PD Selections	0474 325 802
PD Soft	0702 466933
Precision Software Apps.	0223 20828
PSA	0223 208288
PSP	0223 208288
Red Dragon	0745 338094
Shareware Marketing	0297 24088
Softcell Services	0443 238630
SpringSoft	0352 770049
SMS Shareware	0276 681864
TestWare	0423 886415
Transcend Services Ltd	0274 622228
WiseOwl Software	0235 529808

We would be glad to hear from any other shareware libraries who would like to be included in this list which will be updated each month

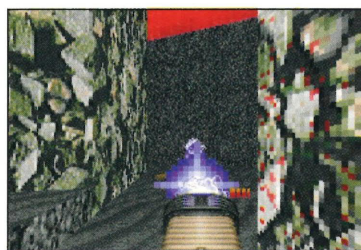
## bulletin board systems (bbs)

BBS systems offer an incredible amount of free software for the price of a call. But be prepared to upload software in order to download and maybe pay a membership fee.

After Hours	0788 288 214
CompuServe	
London	071 490 8881
(300/1200/2400/9600 bps)	
Birmingham	021 633 3474
(300/1200/2400 bps)	
Manchester	061 834 5533
(300/1200/2400 bps)	
Glasgow	041 204 1722
(300/1200/2400 bps)	
Cardiff	0222 344 184
(300/1200/2400 bps)	
Information	0800 289 378
Metric Computers	0705 871471
Minerva	
London	081 659 9191
Scotland	0569 4300
Raytech	0862 88340
Shareware Support	0442 891109
Sound & Vision	0932 252323

## top shareware games

The PD and shareware scene is certainly packed with excellent demos, games, utilities and applications. These are the three most enjoyable games out on the market at the moment:



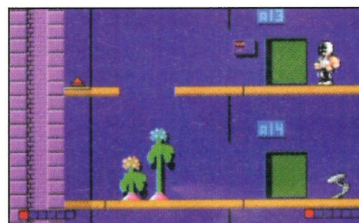
### 1. Doom

The ultimate action 3D massacre. Wander through massive multi-layered levels with an arsenal of destructive weaponry. Your job is to halt the hordes of hell spawn in their tracks before they take over the world. Go to Hell. Untouchable graphics, mind-blowing sound. Probably game of the year already (until Doom 2). The standard by which all others will be judged.



### 2. Epic Pinball

Great pinball sim for shareware. Though not up to the standards of Pinball Fantasies, it has some imaginative tables and a great tune. Check it out and register to get more exciting and more detailed pinball tables.



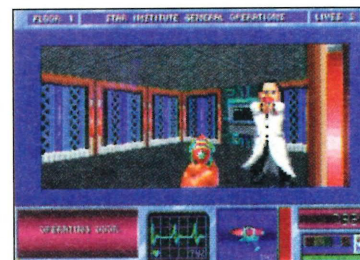
### 3. Electro Body/Man

Although the graphics are fairly old hat the animation, sound and gameplay are excellent. Guide your trooper around techno space bases triggering doorways and shooting droids. A great platform romp and good fun.



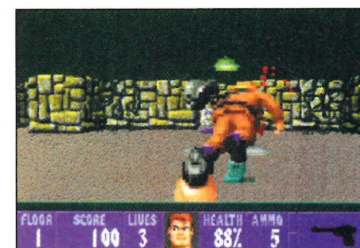
### 4. Zone 66

A quality shoot 'em-up arcade game. The graphics are splendid and the landscape scrolls 360 degrees as you move your ship around blasting everything in sight.



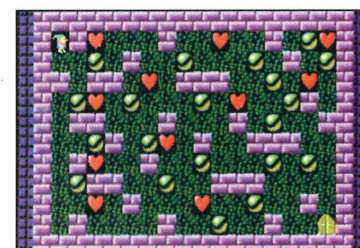
### 5. Blake Stone

Wolfenstein-esque gameplay, but it's not a Nazi wasting session. Set in the future, you're Blake Stone, wandering around enemy ships and labyrinths, collecting weapons and power-ups to defeat the final bad guy. Real time 3D massacre, but not up to Doom standards. Obviously.



### 6. Wolfenstein 3D

The original 3D stroller courtesy of id. It's been far outclassed and outgunned by Doom but it's still a cracker. Wander around the Nazi headquarters and waste them all. Beautifully smooth even on a 286 and plenty of violence. A variety of weapons are available as your man raids the castle's secret rooms and corridors for treasure. Still brilliant.

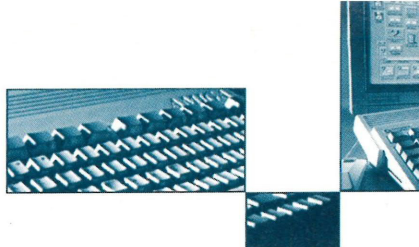


### 7. Heartlight

Taking the part of a small bearded elf, you guide him through 70 puzzling levels to win the hand of Gwendolyn. On each of the levels you have to avoid hazards and collect hearts in a Boulder Dash fashion, removing pieces of earth to retrieve them. Using bombs you have to ruthlessly destroy the obstacles and walls that lie in your path. Some of the later levels are in fact very challenging and good fun and keep you coming back for more despite the simplistic sound and graphics.



# catalog



## the virus threat

Viruses are lethal program files that infect disks and damage their content, then transfer themselves onto other disks. To keep your disks and system virus free, it is a good idea to use one of these commercial and shareware virus killers.

## shareware virus killers

PDSL: one for £6, 0892 663298  
two for £3-45 each,  
three for £2-95 each

1. McAfee Virus Kit  
(Code H424)
2. McAfee Net Virus Tools  
(Code 3532)
3. Integrity Master  
(Code 3486)
4. F-PROT  
(Code 3565)

## the hit list

If you feel you need to contact a software house for either product information, a complaint or perhaps even praise, then simply check out the list below for the latest numbers. Companies in brackets are ones whose products are being distributed by the company whose number they are under. Tell them how you feel.

Accolade	081 8770880
Addictive	081 8048100
Alternative	0977 797777
Beau Jolly	0737 222003
Codemasters	0926 814132
Core Design	0332 297797
CP Software	0993 823463
Daze Marketing	071 3282762
(Silmarils)	
Digital Integration	0276 684959
(Loriciels)	
Domark	081 7802222
Electronic Arts	0753 549442
(360)	
(Broderbund)	
(Millennium)	
(Mindcraft)	
(Origin)	
(SSG)	
Entertainment Int.	0268 541126
(Empire)	
(ReadySoft)	
Europsych Software	0625 859333
Impressions	071 3512133
Infogrames	071 7388199
(Disney Software)	
Interplay	0865 390029
Kompart UK Ltd	0727 868005
(Blue Byte)	
(Colorado Technologies)	

(Internece)	
(Oxford Softworks)	
(Storm Computers)	
Konami	081 4292446
Maxis	071 4902333
MicroProse	0454 329510
Microvalue	0661 860260
(Flair Software)	
Mindscape	0444 246333
Mirage	0260 299909
(CyberDreams)	
Ocean	061 8326633
Psygnosis	051 7095755
Renegade	071 4819214
Sierra On-Line	0734 303171
(Dynamix)	
(Coktel Vision)	
The Software Business	0480 496497
Sales Curve	071 5853308
(Storm)	
Titus	071 7002119
Ubi Soft	081 3439055
US Gold	021 6253366
(Access)	
(Delphine)	
(SSI)	
(LucasFilms)	
(NovaLogic)	
(New World Computing)	
Virgin Games	081 9602255
Zeppelin	091 3857755

## joysticks

One of the most enjoyable pastimes for PC owners is playing games, but it's a commonly known fact that frustration can creep in when your joystick has severe problems keeping up with your gameplaying skills. That's why it is so important to have the best and the right joystick for the job. So look no further as within these pages you'll find all the latest information.

1. Speedking	
Konix £14.99	0495 350101
Analog & Digital	
2. The Bug	
Cheetah £14.99	0222 867777
3. Gravis Analog Pro	
SpectraVideo £59.99	081 9000024
4. Gravis Analog	
SpectraVideo £29.99	
5. Thunder Stick	
Kraft/VizTrade £39.99	0444 239999
6. Free Wheel	
Logic 3/SpectraVideo £34.99	081 9000024

## software fix and patches

Nothing proves more annoying than purchasing software only to find that it is bugged in certain areas. If you have any such games it may be worth your while checking the list below to see if the companies responsible have released a bug fix. These not only correct problems but may also improve or update the original game. Most are available from reputable bulletin boards or the software companies themselves. This list will be updated every month.

company	game effect	version	effect
Access	Amazon	-	Fix canoe bug
Access	Links 386 Pro	-	General Fix
Accolade	Grand Prix Unlimited	1.4	General Fix
Accolade	Protostar	-	-
Accolade	Ringworld	-	-
Dynamix	Aces over Europe	-	Packard bell lock up fix
Dynamix	A-10 Tank Killer 1.5	-	Joystick/Mouse Fix
Dynamix	Aces of the Pacific 1946 Disk	-	General Fix
Dynamix	Front Page Sports Football	-	Roster player Fix
Impressions	Air Bucks	1.21	General Fix
Interplay	Bard's Tale Construction Set	1.3	General Fix
Interplay	Battlechess II	-	General Fix
Interplay	Buzz Aldrin's Race into Space	-	General Fix
Interplay	Castles & Castles II	-	General Fix
Interplay	Rules of Engagement	1.06	Video problems
LucasArts	X-Wing	?	Roland/Soundblaster Fix
MicroProse	B17 Flying Fortress	2	General Update
MicroProse	Civilisation	3	Soundblaster drivers
MicroProse	Crises in the Kremlin	1.01	General Fix
MicroProse	Darklands	7	General Fix
MicroProse	David Leadbetter's Golf	2	General Fix
MicroProse	Falcon 3.0	3.0	General Updates
MicroProse	F-15 III	3	General & new scenario
MicroProse	F117A Stealth Fighter	3	Update to v.4
MicroProse	Formula 1 Grand Prix	1.05	Modem & sound
MicroProse	Gunship 2000	6	Soundblaster
MicroProse	Harrier Jump Jet	2.4	ThrustMaster support
MicroProse	Islands and Ice	8.5	General Fix
MicroProse	Mantis	2	General Fix
MicroProse	Master of Orion	1.3	EMS & General Fix
MicroProse	MiG-29: Falcon 3.0	3	Control & joystick calibration
MicroProse	Pirates. Gold!	3	Updates artwork & sound
MicroProse	Railroad Tycoon Deluxe	2	General update
MicroProse	Rex Nebular	8.49	General Fix
MicroProse	Super Tetris	2	General Fix & CGA compat.
MicroProse	Task Force 1942	2	General Fix
Mindcraft	Magic Candle II	2	General Fix
Mindcraft	Rules of Engagement	1.06	Video problems
Mindscape	20th Century Almanac	-	Soundblaster
Mindscape	Oceans Below	-	SF3 chip card
Mindscape	Mario is Missing	-	General
Mindscape	Newsweek	-	General Fix
Mindscape	Dracula Unleashed	-	Gravis sound card
Mindscape	Toolworks Reference Library	-	Sirrus cards
Ocean	TFX CD/Floppy	-	General
Origin	Ultima Underworld	-	Red screen problems
Origin	Ultima Underworld II	-	Servant strike problems
Origin	Ultima VII	3.4	Update
Origin	Strike Commander	-	Tactical ops fix
Sierra	Island of Dr Brain	-	General Fix
Sierra	Mixed Up Mother Goose MPC	-	Sound Driver Fix
Sierra	Police Quest I	2	General Fix
Sierra	Police Quest III	-	Keyboard & S/B Fix
Sierra	Quest for Glory I	-	VGA Fix
Sierra	Quest for Glory III	-	General Fix
Sierra	Space Quest V	-	286/EGA Fix
Sierra	Willy Beamish	-	General Fix
Sierra	Leisur Suit Larry I & V	-	486 SoundBlaster patch
Sierra	Kings Quest V	-	486 SoundBlaster patch
SSI	Dark Queen of Krynn	-	Gameplay Fix
Three-Sixty	Harpoon	1.32A	Update with designer version
Three-Sixty	V for Victory	3.1	Update



**NEXT MONTH...** THAT MUCH BANDIED ABOUT WORD

A PURE AND SIMPLE ADRENALINE BURNER, DELTA V

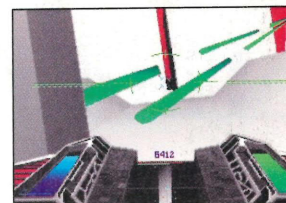
'EDUTAINMENT' BARES ITS SOUL AND EXPLAINS JUST

WHAT IT'S SUPPOSED TO MEAN AND JUST WHAT ITS ROLE IN THE

PC ENTERTAINMENT ARENA ENTAILS IN NEXT MONTH'S MAGAZINE

ACTIONFEST. CAN THE GAME'S SCREEN REALLY OVERTAKE PEN

AND PAPER OR BLACKBOARD SLATE AS WE MOVE NEARER TO THE



**21ST CENTURY? AND YES, THAT ELECTRONIC**

ORIGIN'S PACIFIC STRIKE BLAZES A TRAIL LIKE NO OTHER

**ARTS/ORIGIN** FEATURE INSPIRED BY THOSE

POTENTIALLY MASSIVE SUMMER TIME HITS: BIOFORGE,

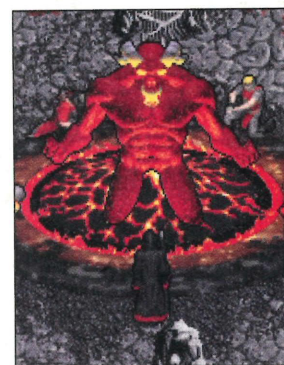
NOCTROPOLIS, SEAWOLF AND WINGS OF GLORY IS

READY TO SURFACE TOO. GAMES-WISE, THERE'S A

PAGAN: ULTIMA VIII. DESTINED TO BE THE ULTIMATE RPG?

GLUT. **PAGAN: ULTIMA VIII** AND PACIFIC STRIKE,

RISE OF THE ROBOTS AND **DELTA V**, ELDER



SCROLLS AND DREAMWEB... WHICH ONE TO CHOOSE? ONLY THE



**PC ACTION** BENCHTEST CAN REVEAL. WE'LL ALSO

RISE OF THE ROBOTS. A BEAT'EM-UP SPECTACULAR

BRING YOU THE INSIDE WORD ON ACTIVISION'S

FORTHCOMING **MECHWARRIOR II: THE CLANS** AND VIRGIN'S

THE 11TH HOUR, PLUS A WHOLE HOST MORE, OF COURSE. PC

ACTION. WHERE ONLY THE BEST WILL DO.

**ISSUE 7. ON SALE  
APRIL 14TH. BE THERE**







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*This rally sim's so lifelike you can almost smell the high-octane fumes. "We have lift off!" Just what you **don't** want to hear from your computer co-driver...*

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*You're strapped into one of the five rally-bred supercars, speeding in the exact tracks of the '93 Rally leaders. Each car handles differently. Each tests your driving skills flat out.*

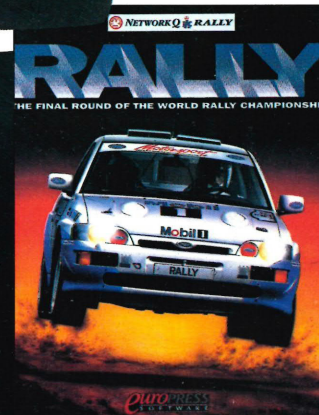
*You're picking up vital seconds when you hang a bend late, clip a bank and flip into a roll – damage your car and you dent your chances.*

*It's the sequel to the top-selling RAC Rally game. But the sound's even more deafening, the digitised video graphics even more *in your face* for an atmosphere that's totally turbo-charged.*

*Flying around the world's toughest rally course is one thing. Staying on earth is another.*

**WARNING: CRASH HELMETS NOT PROVIDED.**

Available for PC, Amiga. PC screen shots shown.



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**End of transmission...** ■

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